

IQBAL AS A THINKER

(Essays by Eminent Scholars)



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The study of Iqbal is a social and political necessity for the Muslims of India. Even in the sphere of religious thought, while strictly adhering to the basic principles of Islam, Iqbal has made valuable contribution to the reconstruction of its religious thought. The study of Iqbal has many aspects—literary, religious, social, political and economic. The literary dilettante may relish with ecstasy the poems for their art value. The social reformer may find inspiration for the social uplift of the society. The politician may seek the political destiny of the nations in the writings of Iqbal which have a merit of superb value. He is an amalgam of a seer, poet and philosopher.

The publisher believed that the diverse facets of Iqbal should be presented to the Muslims of India by various thinkers and writers of eminence and profound learning. With this end in view, the publisher through the generous help of Mr. Taj Mohammed Khayyal, Principal Zamindara College, Gujrat, approached some scholars of India. The publisher, with full humility, expresses his feelings of gratitude to the contributors of the essays published in this volume for their contribution.

The reader, it is hoped, will appreciate the sedulous labour and learning with which these articles were written. It is hoped that the essays will not only help the readers in studying the working of the greatest sage, poet and philosopher, that Muslim world has produced in recent times, but will also induce them to contribute to the Iqbalian literature so greatly needed by Muslim nation.

The publisher also owes an apology to the writers of the articles for the belated publication of this book. His only excuse is the War, which created immense difficulties in securing paper and printing material for the work.

It is hoped that other illuminating articles will be published in the near future. The publisher trusts that scholars who have devoted their time and thought on Iqbal will ungrudgingly send the result of their studies to the publisher who will be only too glad to publish them.

IQBAL'S CONCEPTION OF TIME AND SPACE

IT is a well-recognised fact that a great genius has the capacity to assimilate ideas from all sources and to make them his own. He does not merely copy or translate them, but weaves them into the texture of his own cognition, fits them into their proper places relative to his own characteristic and independent ideas and judgments, and produces a unified and well-ordered system. It is the same with Iqbal. Whether we read his poetical works or his *Lectures*¹ and other writings, we are astonished at the magnitude of his intellectual powers, by the wideness of his knowledge, by the broadness of his outlook and by the thoroughness of his grasp of the classical as well as modern principles of philosophy and religion. He had pondered deeply about the highest and most fundamental problems of life and death as a true believer, as a philosopher and as a poet. This combination of all three in one and the same individual is exceedingly rare, and when it does occur, we can be sure of some startling

¹ By *Lectures* throughout this essay will be meant Iqbal's *Lectures on The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, delivered at Madras and Hyderabad in 1928, and published in 1930.

results and discoveries. What he thinks as a philosopher and experiences as a devout believer, he can express in a forceful poetic language which finds a ready response in the heart of the reader. There is thus no intrinsic difference between philosophy and poetry : they both express the fundamental truths—the one uses a technical language and an analytical method, and the other appeals directly to the inner being :

حق اگر سوزے ندارد حکمت است
شعر می گردد چو سوز از دل گرفت

Iqbal possessed yet another characteristic essential to genius. He always kept an open mind, ready to change his ideas and judgments according to fresh advances in human knowledge. On the very first page of his *Lectures* he sets it down as the basic principle of all inquiry that "there is no such thing as finality in philosophical thinking. As knowledge advances and fresh avenues of thought are opened, other views and probably sounder views than those set forth in these *Lectures* are possible. Our duty is carefully to watch the progress of human thought, and to maintain an independent critical attitude towards it." How refreshingly different from the aggressive dogmatism of our popular leaders who would rather plunge the whole world in an upheaval than admit any defect in their knowledge or any error in their judgment !

No one who reads Iqbal's works carefully can fail to notice that he had always kept himself well-informed of the trend of thought in almost all the important branches of knowledge. It is perhaps not surprising that he was abreast of the current developments in philosophy and literature, as these were, so to speak, his professional spheres of interest. But it comes as an astonishing revelation to most of his readers that he had studied and thought about the fundamental principles and modern ideas of the physical, biological and social sciences in their philosophical implications. He had understood these latest ideas so well that he could use them freely for the purpose of his arguments about philosophical and religious problems. One finds abundant evidence of this in his writings and particularly in his *Lectures*.

Of all the fundamental categories he has discussed, he has not dealt with any one so fully and so frequently as with the age-old philosophical and scientific problem of the nature of Time and Space: In fact, the major portion of his *Lectures* is dominated with the notion of Space and Time, under whose light he has tried to discuss the various problems of religious faith. He thinks that the solution of the problem of Space and Time is a matter of life and death for the Muslims. Thus he says in the *Lectures* (p. 184) :

“ In the history of Muslim Culture, on

the other hand, we find that both in the realm of pure intellect and religious Psychology, by which term I mean higher Sufism, the ideal revealed is the possession and enjoyment of the Infinite. In a culture with such an attitude the problem of Space and Time becomes a question of life and death."

In the course of these discussions he has brought under review all the diverse conceptions of Time and Space held by thinkers from the classical antiquity right up to the present time. It is our task in this essay to analyse these conceptions and to point out the extent of Iqbal's agreement with or difference from them. There will thus emerge a picture of Iqbal's own conception of the nature of these fundamental entities.

Before undertaking this task, however, we must first remove a misunderstanding which a superficial reading of some of Iqbal's verses has created in the minds of many of his readers. It is thought that Iqbal set no value to scientific knowledge, and belittled its importance. No doubt he emphasized the limitations of Science, and the narrow scope of knowledge gained by purely scientific methods. Thus he says in the *Lectures* (p. 44) :

"Physics, as an empirical science, deals with the facts of experience, *i.e.*, sense-experience. The Physicist begins and ends with sensible phenomena, without which it is impossible for him to verify his theories."

"Thus Physics studies the material world; that is to say, the world revealed by the senses. The mental processes involved in this study, and similarly religious and æsthetic experience though part of the total range of experience, are excluded from the scope of physics for the obvious reason that physics is restricted to the study of the material world, by which we mean the world of things we perceive."

But no great scientist disputes this limitation to-day ; it is recognised by almost all the leading authorities.

All the same Iqbal did believe that within its limited field, scientific knowledge has an immense importance for humanity. He voices this conviction poetically in *Jawid-Nama* (p. 82), *Payam-i-Mashriq* (p. 6) and *Rumuz-i-Bekhuđi* (pp. 164-168) :

"گفت حکمت را خدا خیر کثیر
هر کجای خیر را بینی بگیر
علم اشیا علم الاسماست
هم عصا و هم ید بیضاست
علم اشیا داد مغرب را فروغ
حکمت او ماست می بندد زدوغ
علم اسما اعتبار آدم است
حکمت اشیا حصار آدم است
علم حرف و صوت را شہپر دهد
پاکشی گوهر به ناگوهر دهد
علم را بر اوج افلاک است ره
تاز چشم مهر بر کند دنگہ

نسخہ او نسخہ تفسیر کل
 بستہ تدبیر او تقدیر کل
 دشت را گوید حبابِ ده دهد
 بحر را گوید سراجِ ده دهد
 چشم او بر وارداتِ کائنات
 قابہ بیند محکّماتِ کائنات
 دل اگر بندد بہ حق پیغمبری است
 وارِ حق بیگانہ گردد کافری است

and philosophically in the *Lectures* (p. 10) :

"Since the Middle Ages, infinite advance has taken place in the domain of human thought and experience. The extension of man's power over nature has given him a new faith and a fresh sense of superiority over the forces that constitute his environment." "It seems as if the intellect of man is outgrowing its own most fundamental categories—time, space and causality. With the advance of scientific thought even our concept of intelligibility is undergoing a change. The theory of Einstein has brought a new vision of the universe, and suggests new ways of looking at the problems common to both religion and philosophy." In another passage, he writes still more emphatically: "Thus the view that we have taken gives a fresh spiritual meaning to physical science. The knowledge of Nature is the knowledge of God's behaviour. In our observation of Nature, we are virtually seeking a kind of

intimacy with the Absolute ego ; and this is only another form of worship." (*Lectures*, p. 77.) At the same time Iqbal warns us that scientific knowledge alone is not sufficient. It must be supplemented by spiritual experience.

The Common sense view of Time and Space

We have remarked above that in the course of his lectures Iqbal has passed under review the different theories of space and time held by various thinkers during the ages. We shall give a coherent account of these different views bringing out their salient features, and noticing Iqbal's observations on them.

The common sense conception of Time and Space is something like this. The events that happen in a day do so in a simple order just as the pearls are situated in a necklace in an order one after the other. We can consider the thread as 'Time' and the succession of events with respect to each other can be represented by the words "before" and "after." Now just as in the thread there are places between two pearls which are unoccupied, similarly it is quite possible that the instant between two events may pass without the occurrence of any significant event, so that our mind would consider it as an eventless instant. Thus we perceive time as passing, and we estimate the duration between two events as a "short interval" or "long interval." On talking to other human beings we find that all

of them have nearly the same consciousness of the passage of time. We conclude therefore that time is something external to us—something objective—which passes by the consciousness of each individual in the same way as a river flows by the columns of a bridge. Science makes an exact measurement of this "flow" of time by observing events which occur at equal intervals, such as the passage of the sun or stars over the meridian.

But our conception of space is somewhat different from that of time. We locate objects in space by seeing them with our eye, and the construction of our eye is such that the rays coming from the same direction converge at the same point in the eye, so that two different objects, one behind the other, appear to be situated on the same spot. But we feel that we cannot locate the objects only by their directions, because if we move slightly from our original position, the directions of the various objects change considerably. The same two objects which appeared formerly to be situated in the same direction are now seen to be in different directions. Now just as two successive events might occur after some interval—in other words just as there can be some eventless duration between two successive events, so there can be a "distance" between two objects which appear one behind the other. Just as we measure the interval between two events by the ticking

of the clock, similarly we measure the distance between two objects by moving a ruler gradually from one object to the other. This method of measuring distance does not depend on our power of vision or on the properties of light. A being deprived of all its faculties except that of touch can still determine an order of various objects in space. But this order may be different from the order determined by another being with the help of its eyesight. Thus, we find that the order of various objects is not something absolute and invarient, but is subjective, whereas we saw above that the order-in-time between two events is objective, *i.e.*, does not depend on our personal factor.

The Conception of Time and Space held by the Greeks

The conception of space propounded by the Greeks is referred to by Iqbal in several passages in the *Lectures*. The Philosopher Plato has expressed himself thus in his book *Timaeus* (pp. 49-51) :

“Space is that in which all objects are situated. It never changes because its characteristics remain unaltered. If it were like anything which is situated in it, then when two objects possessing entirely different characteristics are introduced in it their characteristics should be altered because they would show the characteristic of space also. Hence that which contains all objects must itself

be free from all shape or form." "Space is never annihilated; it supplies room for all things created. In short, all existing things must be situated somewhere, and must occupy some space. That which is neither on the earth nor on the sky is nothing."

According to this conception, Nature was considered as an aggregate of solid objects between which there is a void having neither shape nor form nor any other characteristic. Space is nothing objective or external, it only serves as a medium for the arrangement of objects in an order.

Another Greek Philosopher, Zeno, considered that space is infinitely divisible, and consequently all movement in space is only an illusion, because it is impossible to pass through an infinity of points in a finite time. This unreality of movement implies the unreality of an independent and objective space. Zeno asks: How can you go from one position at one moment to the next position at the next moment without in the transition being at no position at no moment. This argument is obviously based on the assumption that space and time consist of an infinite number of points and instants. On this assumption it is easy to argue that since between two points the moving body will be out of place, motion is impossible, for there is no place for it to take place.

The classical Greek Philosophy preached

that the world was a static world. The highest scientific ideal of the Greeks was the static geometry of points in which motion played no part. It was their firm conviction that movement had no effect whatever on the points, lines or figures that were moved. When in his daily life a Greek Philosopher was obliged to take cognisance of motion, he looked upon it "as a most unfortunate deviation of the reality from his beautiful world of intellectual abstraction, and as something to be deplored and ignored." Hence they could develop only the sciences of geometry and statics but they did not touch the science of dynamics. Even in their arts, they clung to the ideal of a figure in repose. As one writer has put it, "their statuary stood for things, not for action, just as their geometry stood for points not for events."

Muslim Thinkers

Coming to the Muslim Era, Iqbal discusses the view of different schools of thought like the Ashaira (اشاعرة) and the Mutazila (معتزلة) and particularly of the savants: Al-Ashari, Ibn Hazm, Tusi and Iraqi.

The Ashaira did not believe in the infinite divisibility of space and time, but put forth rather a quantum theory of space and time inasmuch as they considered space, time and motion to be made up of points and instants which cannot be further subdivided. They

were thus able to refute Zeno's paradox about the impossibility of motion. For if there was a limit to the divisibility of space and time, movement from one point of space to another point is possible in a finite time. Their explanation of the movement of a body was as follows :

The Ashaira regarded space as generated by the aggregation of atoms, and hence they could conceive of motion only as the atom's passage through space. They could not say that a body in its motion passed over all the intervening points in space, as this would be tantamount to the belief in the existence of vacuum as an independent reality. Hence they put forward the notion of "Jumps" which is akin to the modern quantum jumps postulated by Planck and Bohr. This theory says that the changes of state of a dynamical system are not continuous, but discontinuous. A particle appears only at certain discrete orbits, and takes no notice of any intermediate orbits.

Iqbal confesses himself unable to understand this solution of the difficulty about the independent existence of Space. He believes that motion is inconceivable without time, and since time comes from psychic life, the latter is more fundamental than motion. He arranges psychic life, time and motion in a descending order of implication, and argues that there can be no motion without time

and no time without psychic life. Thus with Iqbal also, time loses its absolute character, and becomes dependent on the psychic life. He agrees with the Ashairi and with the modern relativists that time and space are not two distinct and absolutely independent categories, but rather there is one "point-instant" or "space-time continuum" as the scientists say. But he differs from the Ashairi in his view of the mutual relation between the point and the instant. The instant in Iqbal's opinion, is the more fundamental of the two, although the point is inseparable from the instant as being a necessary mode of its manifestation. This is consonant with the ideas promulgated by the theory of relativity.

Iqbal criticises the doctrine of atomic time put forward by the Ashairi, according to whom time is a succession of individual 'nows.' This objective view-point which is akin to that of the Greeks is just as barren, and leads to the absurd conclusion that there is a 'vacuum' between every two individual 'nows' or moments of time. We shall explain later Iqbal's objections to this objective view of time, which Newton also shared along with the Ashairi.

The Muslim thinker Ibn Hazm refuted this Ashairite notion of atomic time and atomic space which in his opinion could not logically resolve the paradox of Zeno. For Ibn Hazm space and time are continuous, a view

shared by the modern mathematician Cantor and his successors. In the modern theory of numbers and sets of points, it is shown that between any two points, A and B, however close to each other, we can always find an infinite number of points. This 'compactness' of the set of points can be illustrated as follows. You cannot say that a point B is next to a point A, because B is not next to A, nor is any other point C, D, etc. We cannot name any position next to a given position, nor any instant next to a given instant. When a body is said to be moving, what we mean is that we observe it at a number of positions at a number of instants. At one instant it is observed at the point P; at a neighbouring instant it is observed at a neighbouring point Q, and so on. Thus to any given instant of time corresponds a position of the body, and to any given position of the body corresponds an instant of time. This mutually unique relation or correspondence between the sequence of positions and the sequence of instants is called movement. This doctrine makes it possible for us to affirm the reality of space, time and movement, and at the same time to avoid the paradox in Zeno's argument. But Iqbal thinks that even this doctrine does not resolve the difficulties arising out of the infinite divisibility of space and time. The mathematical conception of a mutually unique correspondence between

positions and instants applies not to movement regarded as an act, but rather to the picture of movement as viewed from outside. The act of movement, *i.e.*, movement as lived and not as thought does not admit of any divisibility. The flight of arrow observed as a passage in space is divisible, but its flight regarded as an act, apart from its realisation in space, is one and incapable of partition into a multiplicity. In partition lies its destruction.

Iqbal has described the revolt against the Greek conception of a static Universe organised for the first time by the Muslims. As remarked before, the Greeks thought that the world was a static world of points. Islam preached the opposite view. It enjoined the people to take interest in the world as it is, not as it ought to be. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, the Universe is dynamic, and motion being a fundamental part of it, must be included in the scheme of the world :

”فریب نظر ہے سکوں و ثبات

تڑپتا ہے ہر ذرہ کائنات“

Mulla Jalal-ud-Din Dawwani and the sufi poet Iraqi take a relativistic view of time, having a different stratum for different beings possessing various grades between pure materiality and pure spirituality. “The time of gross bodies which arises from the revolution of the heavens, is divisible into past,

element of distance is not entirely absent from this space, for immaterial beings, while they can easily pass through stone walls, cannot altogether dispense with motion. The highest point in the scale of spatial freedom is reached by the human soul. *Thirdly*, we have the Divine Space which we reach by passing through the infinite varieties of space, and which is absolutely free from all dimensions and constitutes the meeting point of all infinities.

Iraqi is thus trying vaguely to reach the concept of space as an infinite continuum and as a dynamic appearance.

The Conception of Modern Scientists

Turning now from the Muslim thinkers of the Middle Ages to the European thinkers of the modern era, we come to Descartes, the French Philosopher and Mathematician of the 17th century. Along with his system of Philosophy he put forward a new conception of space. It is his fundamental proposition that all things belong either to mind or to matter, and there is no relation between matter and mind themselves. The characteristic of mind is thought which does not occupy any space nor is susceptible to any order in space. The characteristic of matter is the occupation of space. Hence Descartes was of opinion that there must be some substance at every point of space, otherwise there will be some useless void left in space, and it will be against the

perfection of the Creator, to create something without any purpose. This is the same doctrine as of ancients: "Nature abhors vacuum." Thus although the interstellar space might appear empty to us, it is in fact filled with a continuous and all-pervading substance, which was called 'ether,' and which played such an important role in the 19th century Physics. Since Descartes' time, space became a real, external and objective thing instead of being merely a receptacle for other objects.

Newton based his conception of time and space on the doctrine of a fixed universal ether, for his mechanics required that there must be a point in space which is absolutely at rest. For instance, consider his first law of motion, which is called the law of Inertia. According to this law, a body on which no force is acting, moves uniformly in a straight line. Now suppose that we let a smooth spherical ball roll on a smooth table. We observe that the ball is moving in a straight line. But an observer, who follows and measures its path from another planet, say Mars, would assert that the path is not a straight line but a curved line from his point of view, because the earth is going round the Sun. Thus we cannot prove the principle of inertia by experimenting on a moving body. But where are we to get a place which is absolutely at rest, so that we may assert that if we experiment

on that place we can prove the principle of Inertia. Such a place cannot be situated on a planet or on the sun or on the stars or on the nebulae either, because all of these are known to be moving with more or less fast speeds. In all our wide world, we are not acquainted with a single body which is absolutely at rest. Hence Newton was obliged to postulate the existence of the ether and along with it the existence of an objective and absolute space. He says: "Absolute space, in virtue of its nature and without reference to any external object whatever, always remains immutable and immovable." "Relative space is a measure or a movable part of the absolute space. Our senses designate it by its position with respect to other bodies."

Newton expresses similar views about the nature of time, the flow of which receives expression in the uniform motion due to inertia. Thus he says: "Absolute, true and mathematical time flows in itself and in virtue of its nature uniformly and without reference to any external object whatever. It is also called duration. Relative, apparent and ordinary time is a perceptible and external, either exact or unequal, measure of duration which we customarily use instead of true time, such as hour, day, month, year." He says further: "All motions may be accelerated or retarded. Only the flow of absolute time cannot be changed. The same duration and

the same persistence occurs in the existence of all things, whether the motion, be rapid, slow or zero."

Iqbal (*Lectures*, p. 102) has serious objections to raise against this objective view of time expressed by Newton. Thus, he says that if time is "something which in itself and from its own nature flows equally," we cannot understand how a thing is affected on its immersion in this stream of time, and how it differs from things that do not participate in its flow. "Nor can we form," says Iqbal, "any idea of the beginning, the end and the boundaries of time if we try to understand it on the analogy of a stream. Moreover, if flow, movement, or passage is the last word as to the nature of time, there must be another time to time the movement of the first time, and another which times the second time, and so on to infinity."

Thus, Iqbal thinks that there are serious flaws in the objective conception of time. All the same, he admits that we cannot regard time as something unreal like the Greeks. Nor can we deny that even though we possess no sense-organ to perceive time, it is a kind of flow, and has, as such, a genuine objective or atomic aspect, as confirmed by the modern quantum theory.

Iqbal criticises also Nietzsche's views of time and space. Nietzsche expressed these views in connection with his doctrine of

Eternal Recurrence or Immortality. This doctrine is based on the principle of conservation of energy formulated in the 19th century. Nietzsche agrees with Kant and other Philosophers that space is only a subjective form. It is meaningless to say that the world is in space in the sense that it is situated in an absolute empty void. But Nietzsche's conception of time is opposed to that of Kant and Schopenhauer. He does not think that time is a subjective form. Rather he believes it to be a real and infinite process which can only be conceived as periodic. There can be dissipation of energy in an infinite empty space. Since the amount of energy is constant, and consequently finite, the number of energy-centres is limited, and their mutual actions and reactions exactly calculable. There is no beginning or end of this ever-active energy, no equilibrium, no first or last change. And since our Universe consists only of the changes of energy, Nietzsche believes that the world has lasted from eternity and will last up to eternity. Now since time is infinite, therefore all possible combinations of energy-centres have already been exhausted. Every event repeats itself in a cyclic order over and over again. Whatever happens now has happened before an infinite number of times, and will continue to happen an infinite number of times in the future. The order of events in the Universe is also fixed. Iqbal considers this view of

Nietzsche's as only a more rigid kind of mechanism based not on any ascertainable fact but only on the hypothetical constancy of the quantity of energy. In Iqbal's view this perpetual circular movement in time makes immortality absolutely intolerable :

”هو نقشى اگر باطل تکرار سے کیا حاصل“

Similarly Iqbal says elsewhere :

یا جہانے قازہ یا امتحانے قازہ

میں کئی تاجند با ما آنچه کردی پیش ازین

Iqbal thinks that this doctrine of Nietzsche is nothing more than a fatalism worse than the one summed up in the word "Qismat." We can aspire only for what is absolutely new, and since the absolutely new is unthinkable on Nietzsche's view, it destroys the action-tendencies of the human organism for the fight of life, and relaxes the tension of the ego.

Finally, we come to Einstein who has revolutionised the whole conception of time and space from the scientific point of view, and has dealt a death-blow both to the determinism of Newton and to the materialism of the 19th century. Iqbal has a great admiration and respect for Einstein and dedicates a whole poem to him in the *Payam-i-Mashriq* :

جلوہ می خواست مانند کلیم ناصبور

قاضی مستنیر او کشود اسرار نور

از فراز آسمان تاجش آدم یک نفسی

زود پروازے کہ پروازش نیاید در شعور

یے تغیر در طلسم چون و چند و بیشی و کم
 برتر از پست و بلند و دیروز و نزد و دور
 در نهادش تار و شید و سوز و ساز و برگ و زیست
 اهرمن از سوز او و ساز او جبریل و حور
 من چه گویم از مقام آں حکیم نکته سنج
 کرده زردشتی ز نسل موسی و هارون ظهور

Einstein has shown that the conception of an absolute time and an absolute space is untenable both on theoretical as well as experimental grounds. He has analysed the notion of the simultaneity of two events, and has shown that there is no such thing as absolute simultaneity. The events which are simultaneous for one person, A, need not be simultaneous for another person, B; they can happen one after the other for him. Even the rate of the flow of time can differ for A and for B. If A finds from his clock that there is an interval of one hour between two specified events, B can very well reckon that the interval between the same two events is more or less than an hour. Thus time is not absolute but relative. Every observer carries his own proper and characteristic time which differs from the time of every other observer if they are in relative motion.

Similarly, Einstein shows that space is also relative and not absolute, because the distance between two moving bodies has no meaning unless we specify which observer is

measuring this distance, and at what time he is doing it. And since time itself is relative, therefore distance which varies with time must also be relative. Moreover, it has been experimentally demonstrated by Michelson and Moreley, and other workers, that the distance between two bodies is different for two observers in relative motion, on account of the Fitz-Gerald-Lorentz contraction.

Thus, according to the theory of relativity, time and space are not absolute and separate from each other, but relative and mutually dependent. The Universe does not consist of two separate categories, time and space, but of a single space-time continuum, in which both time and space have the same status. Our three-dimensional world has now become four-dimensional, because we require four elements, for example, length, breadth, height and time, to determine an event completely. An event does not merely happen somewhere, but it happens somewhere at some time. Thus, for Einstein, the space-time is real but relative to the observer.

The logical consequences of the theory of relativity, which can be deduced by exact mathematical reasoning on the basis of the fundamental postulate of the relativity of time and space are as follows :

(1) There is a mutual and reciprocal contraction in length, dilation in time and increase in mass for two observers in relative motion.

As Iqbal puts it, "the object observed is variable ; it is relative to the observer ; its mass, shape and size change as the observer's position and speed change. Movement and rest, too, are relative to the observer." (*Lectures*, pp. 51-52.)

Iqbal has brought out this relative character of space-time in the description of the angel "Zarwan" (زروان) who takes him to a journey of the heavens in the book (*Jawid-Nama*, pp. 19-22). Rumi explains to Iqbal the secrets of معراج (heavenly journey) by saying that 'Mi'raj is just a change in Consciousness':

از شعور است ایی که گوئی نردودور
چیست معراج ؟ انقلاب اندر شعور
انقلاب اندر شعور از جذب و شوق
وا رهند جذب و شوق از تحت و فوق
ایى بدن با جان ما انبار نیست
مشت خاکے مانع پرواز نیست

and asks him to proceed on the heavenly journey by stepping on space-time, i.e., by conquering it :

بر مکان و بر زمان رسوا رمشو
فارغ از پیچاک ایی ز ناز شو
چشم بکشا بر زمان و بر مکان
ایى دویک حال است از احوال جاں

Then Zarwan, the spirit of space-time, appears to Iqbal in a dual light, by which Iqbal

portrays its relative character :

زاں سحاب افرشته آمد فرود
 باد و طلعت ایی چو آتش آں چو دور
 آں چو شب تاریک و ایی روشن شهاب
 چشم ایی بیدار و چشم آں بخواب
 بال او را رنگهائے سرخ و زرد
 سبز و سیمین و کبود و لاجورد
 چوں خیال اندر مزاج او رمے
 از زمینی تا کھکشان او را دے
 هر زمان او را هوائے دیگرے
 هر کشادن در فضائے دیگرے

(2) Energy has also inertia, or "weight", as it is called in common parlance. In fact Einstein has shown that energy and matter are two different states of one and the same thing, just as water and ice are two different states of the same substance. Energy can be transformed into matter and matter can be transformed into energy according to a certain formula discovered by Einstein. This has been proved experimentally in the laboratory. This is one of the greatest scientific discoveries of the 20th century. The theory of relativity and the quantum theory have combined to show that everything in the Universe has a dual character. It behaves sometimes like a wave and sometimes like a particle. There is no intrinsic difference between matter and energy. This theory has sounded the death-knell of materialism.

The stock-in-trade argument of the materialists and atheists was that matter could not have been created by a being who is non-material. But now we know that matter is not essentially distinct from energy. The Qur'an says : *الله نور السموات والارض* i.e., "God is the light of the heavens and the earth." Iqbal recognises this philosophical value of the theory of relativity. He says in the *Lectures* (p. 52): "There is therefore no such thing as a self-subsistent materiality of the classical physics." "It (the theory of relativity) destroys, not the objectivity of nature but the view of substance as simple location in space—a view which led to materialism in classical physics. Substance for modern Relativity-Physics is not a persistent thing with variable states, but a system of inter-related events." In another passage (p. 47) Iqbal says that "the concept of matter has received the greatest blow from the hand of Einstein, whose discoveries have laid the foundation of a far-reaching revolution in the entire domain of human thought."

(3) Another fundamental and far-reaching result in the theory of relativity is that along with time, space and mass, force also becomes relative. As a matter of fact Einstein has demonstrated by a detailed analysis that it is entirely unnecessary and superfluous to introduce the concept of force in science. There is no such thing as force. Bodies

move not because they are pulled or pushed, or because there is a gravitational, electrical or magnetic attraction, but because the space-time continuum is of such a nature that bodies are obliged to move in their apparent orbits. When the water of a river flows down to the sea, do we say that the river is attracted by the sea? The ground along the course of the river is such that water is obliged to flow down to the sea. Thus force is reduced to a characteristic of space-time, and the movements of bodies are explained on the principle that they seek their easiest path in their space-time.

Further, the nature of space-time is influenced by the presence of matter. This makes it necessary to abandon the perceptual space of Euclid and Newton which they considered to be flat, *i.e.*, in which the Pythagorean theorem is valid. The 19th century mathematicians had created various geometries in which different postulates were assumed, and which contained theorems contradictory to Euclid's. Up to the year 1915, these "non-Euclidean" geometries remained merely theoretical abstractions without any practical value. Our physical space was still believed to be the flat space of Euclid. In 1915, however, Einstein showed that both on theoretical as well as experimental grounds it was not possible to adhere any longer to the Euclidean flatness of physical space. The

physical space is rather non-Euclidean or 'curved' as it is also called.

This curvature of space is now a universally recognised scientific fact, and Iqbal was perfectly aware of it and its corollary about the finiteness and unboundedness of the Universe. At various places in his poems he reiterates this idea :

کاروار تہک کر فضا کے پیچ و خم میں رہ گیا

Writing about the philosophical value of Einstein's theory, Iqbal says : " Secondly, the theory makes space dependent on matter. The Universe, according to Einstein, is not a kind of island in an infinite space ; it is finite but boundless, beyond it there is no empty space."

Thus Iqbal is in general agreement with the ideas of the relativity theory. But he raises one objection to it, which, in the opinion of the present writer, is due to a misconception about the theory of relativity. Iqbal, along with other philosophers, thinks that relativity denies reality to time, and makes it as a fourth dimension of space. This would mean that the future is something already given ; it is as indubitably fixed as the past. Time would cease to be a free creative movement. There would prevail a rigid determinism in the universe. This is not a correct view of the theory of relativity. Time is a fourth dimension, not of space, but of the space-time continuum. Thus relativity gives as much reality to time

as to space. It goes still further. In pure space there is no way of distinguishing between an absolutely backward and an absolutely forward position. But in time there is a way of determining the past and the future. The second law of Thermo-dynamics, namely, the law of a constant increase of entropy, gives us the means of finding out which of the two events is before and which after. The theory of relativity leaves the direction or the sense of flow of time from past to future, unaltered. The chronological order of events is not relative to the observers ; it is the same for all of them. Iqbal is right when he objects to the theory of serial time put forward by Ouspensky and other thinkers, that on the basis of this theory, it would be possible, by a careful choice of the velocities of the observer and the system in which a given set of events is happening, to make the effect precede its cause. But this can never happen in the theory of relativity. There is no way of choosing the frame of reference so that the mutual order of cause and effect is inverted. Iqbal confesses that "it is not possible for us laymen to understand what is the real nature of Einstein's time " (p. 53). Had he understood it thoroughly, he would have found that modern science does not leave any possibility, even theoretical, for rigid determinism of the classical physics.* It still leaves

* It is not possible in this essay to explain at length the theory of relativity. The present writer has given full and detailed

ample scope for the creative evolution of the Qur'an : (كل يوم هو في شان) which has been adopted lately by Bergson.

Iqbal's Final Views about Time and Space

As we have already remarked, Iqbal is in general agreement with the Theory of Relativity about the nature of time and space. He agrees with Whitehead's presentation of Relativity, that "Nature is not a static fact situated in an a-dynamic void, but a structure of events possessing the character of a continuous creative flow." Space and time are both relative and real but time is the more fundamental of the two. Though space-time is the matrix of all things, still the relation between space and time is akin to the relation between the body and the mind. Time is the mind of space. Iqbal points out that Einstein's theory, which as a scientific theory, deals only with the structure of things, throws no light on the ultimate nature of things which possess that structure. It should not be forgotten that the theory neglects certain characteristics of time as experienced by us, and it is not possible to say that the nature of time is exhausted by the characteristics which the theory does note in the interests of a systematic account of those aspects of nature which can be mathematically treated.

explanations in a non-technical language in his book on Relativity published by the Anjuman Tarraqi-i-Urdu in 1940.

Iqbal therefore proceeds to analyse the further aspects of time which are not included in the physical theory. He says that "the purely physical point of view is only partially helpful in our understanding of the nature of time. The right course is a careful psychological analysis of our conscious experience which alone reveals the true nature of time. Though space-time is the matrix of all things, still the relation between space and time is akin to the relation between the body and the mind. Time is the mind of space. He quotes a set of verses from the Qur'an, which, indicating the relativity of our reckoning of time, suggest the possibility of unknown levels of consciousness. He agrees with Bergson in his view about the duration in time and in the universal change both in the external world and in our inner life. But the Ego in its inner life has two sides, corresponding to our physical and spiritual existence. Iqbal calls them the "efficient ego" and the "appreciative ego." On its efficient side the ego enters into relation with the physical world of space-time. This ego, while retaining its unity 'as a totality,' discloses itself as nothing more than a series of discrete (quantum) states. The time of this efficient ego is just a dimension of the space-time continuum. It is of the serial character postulated by the Ashaira. The Qur'an recognises this physical time in several verses.

But the Qur'an also lays down that there is

another time, namely, that of the appreciative ego. The appreciative ego lives in pure duration, *i.e.*, change without succession. In the life-process of this deeper ego, the states of consciousness melt into each other. The unity of the appreciative ego is like the unity of a germ in which the experiences of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality, but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. The time of this appreciative ego is non-serial in character. The changes and movements of the appreciative ego are indivisible ; their elements interpenetrate. The multiplicity of these distinct states of this ego is not quantitative but only qualitative. The Qur'an speaks about this time in the following manner :

“ All things We have created with a fixed destiny : Our Command was but one, swift as the twinkling of an eye.” (54 : 50.)

The interval that the efficient ego reckons in millennia and centuries and years, is the same 'now' for the appreciative ego. Just as in a single momentary mental act of perception of light we hold together a frequency of wave motion which is practically incalculable, transforming thus succession into duration, similarly, the appreciative ego synthesizes all the 'heres' and 'nows'—the small changes of space and time, indispensable to the efficient ego—into the coherent wholeness of personality.

Iqbal points out that nothing is more alien

to the Quranic outlook than the idea that the Universe is the temporal working out of the preconceived plan. The universe, according to the Qur'an, is dynamic. "It is a growing universe and not an already completed product, which left the hands of its maker ages ago, and is now lying stretched in space as a dead mass of matter to which time does nothing." A critical interpretation of the sequence of time as revealed in ourselves, leads Iqbal to the notion of the ultimate Reality as pure duration in which thought, life and purpose interpenetrate to form an organic unity. Thus time is an essential element of the ultimate Reality.

Some thinkers, like McTaggart, have been misled in ascribing unreality to time by not keeping in mind the distinction between the serial time of the efficient ego, and the non-serial time, the pure duration, of the appreciative ego. They assume that the serial nature of time is final. Says Iqbal, "If we regard past, present and future as essential to time, then we picture time as a straight line, part of which we have travelled and left behind, and part lies yet untravelled before us. This is taking time, not as a living creative movement but as a static absolute." His answer to the determinists like McTaggart is that the future exists only as an open possibility and not as a fixed reality. Here the modern quantum theory supports Iqbal.

A deeper insight into our conscious experience leads Iqbal to believe that beneath the appearance of serial duration there is true duration. The Ultimate Ego (God) exists in pure duration wherein change ceases to be a succession of varying attitudes, and reveals its true character as continuous creation, "untouched by weariness," and unseizable by, "slumber or sleep." (لا تأخذه سنة ولا نوم)

According to Iqbal, therefore, the life of the ego exists in its movement from appreciation to efficiency, from intuition to intellect, and atomic time is born out of this movement. He uses this concept to reconcile the opposition of permanence and change, of time regarded as an organic whole of eternity and time regarded as atomic. Accepting the guidance of the conscious experience, and conceiving the life of the All-inclusive Ego on the analogy of the finite ego, Iqbal shows that the time of the Ultimate Ego is revealed as change without succession, *i.e.*, an organic whole which appears atomic because of the creative movement of the ego. On the one hand, therefore, the ego lives in eternity, *i.e.*, in non-successional change; on the other, it lives in serial time, which Iqbal conceives as organically related to eternity in the sense that it is a measure of non-successional change. This explains the relation between Divine Time and serial time which contains in itself the essentially Islamic idea of creative evolution.

Iqbal believes with Islam in the reality of time. He conceives of life as a continuous movement in time. He believes that man with his body, mind and soul is a single unit. It is a mistake to suppose that man can be "bifurcated into two distinct and separate realities which somehow have a point of contact, but which are opposed to each other. The fact is that matter and spirit are not opposed to each other—matter is nothing but spirit in space-time reference. We have already mentioned the fact that according to modern relativistic quantum theory, matter and energy are not opposed to each other, but only two states of one and the same thing. Science has arrived at this result within the last few years. It ought to cause no surprise, therefore, when Iqbal says that "The unity called man is body when you look at it as acting in regard to what we call the external world; it is mind or soul when you look at it as acting in regard to the ultimate aim and ideal of such acting."

Turning from his philosophical lectures to his poetical works, we find that Iqbal has given expression to the Divine character of Time in several beautiful verses. Thus the idea of life being nothing but a continuous movement in time is brought out in the following lines in *Bal-i-Jibreel*, (p. 126).

”سلسلہ روز و شب نقش گر حادثات
سلسلہ روز و شب اصل حیات و ممات

سلسلہ روز و شب تار حریر دو رنگ
جس سے بناتی ہے ذات اپنی قباۓ صفات
سلسلہ روز و شب ساز ازل کی فغاں
جس سے دکھاتی ہے ذات زیر ویم ممکنات
تیرے شب و روز کی اور حقیقت ہے کیا
ایک زمانے کی رو جس میں نہ دن ہے نہ رات

Zarwan, the spirit of space-time explains to Iqbal in *Javid-Nama*, that Time is the essential element of ultimate reality :

”گفت زروانم جہاں را قاہرہ
ہم نہانم از نگہ ہم ظاہرہ
بستہ ہر تدبیر با تقدیر من
ناطق و صامت ہمہ نشیپر من
غنیچہ اندر شاخ می بالد زمین
مرغک اندر آشیای نالد زمین
من حیاتم من مہاتم من نشور
من حساب و دوزخ و فردوس و حور
آدم و افرشتہ در بند من است
عالم شننی روزہ فرزند من است
ہر گلے کز شاخ می چینی منم
ام ہر چیزے کہ می بینی منم

The following lines in *Asrar-i-Khndi* are a poetic exposition of the truth that, “It is time regarded as one organic whole that the Qur’an describes as *Taqdir* (تقدیر) or the Destiny. Destiny is time regarded as prior to the disclosure of its possibilities. It is time free from the net of causal sequence. It is time as felt

and not as thought and calculated. One who masters the secret of Time masters the destiny:

”بجز بادا خاک پاک شافعی
عالم سرخوش ز تاک شافعی
فکر او کوکب ز گرد و چبده است
”سیف بران“ وقت را نامیده است
من چو گویم سرایی شمشیر چیست
آب او سرمایه دار از زندگی است
صاحبش بالاتر از امید و بیم
دست او بیضا تر از دست کلیم“

The tragedy of human life is that, instead of mastering time, man has become its slave considering serial time as the final time:

”اے اسیر دوش و فردا درنگر
در دل خود عالم دیگر نگر
در گل خود تخم ظلمت کاشتی
وقت را مثل خطی پنداشتی
باز با پیمانہ لیل و نہار
فکر تو پیمود طول روزگار
تو کہ از اصل زمان آگہ نہ
از حیات جاوداں آگہ نہ
تا کجا در روز و شب باشی اسیر
رمز وقت از ”لی مع الله“ یا دیگر
ایں و آن پیدا است از رفتار وقت
زندگی سریست از اسرار وقت
وقت را مثل مکان گسترده
امتیاز دوش و فردا کرده

اے چو بورم کردہ از بستان خویش
 ساختی از دست خود زندان خویش
 وقت ما کو اول و آخر ندید
 از خیابان ضمیر ما دمید
 زندہ از عرفان اصلش زندہ تر
 هستی او از سحر تابندہ تر
 زندگی از دھر و دھر از زندگی است
 "لا تسبوا لدھر" فرمان نبی است

The poem (نوائے وقت) in *Payam-i-Mashriq* epitomizes Iqbal's whole conception of time. Physical time regarded as the fourth dimension of the space-time continuum is relative. But time regarded as destiny is real and the very essence of things. It is not a mere repetition of homogeneous moments which make conscious experience a delusion. Every moment in the life of Reality is original, producing what is absolutely novel and unforeseeable. To exist in real time is not to be bound by the fetters of the serial time, but to create it from moment to moment and to be absolutely free and original in creation. All the activities of life are due to the free creative movement in time. Thus Time speaks:

خورشید بہ دامنم' انجم بہ گریبانم
 درمن نگری ہیچم' درخود نگری جانم
 در شہر و بیابانم' در کاخ و شبستانم
 من دردم و درمانم' من عیشی فراوانم
 من تیغ جہاں سوزم' من چشمہ حیوانم

چنگیزی و تیموری' مشتے ز غبارے من
 ہنگامہ افرنگی' یک جستہ شرارے من
 انسان و جہان او' از نقش و نگار من
 خون حگر مردان' سامان بہار من
 من آتش سوزانم' من روضہ رضوانم

آسودہ و سیارم ایی' طرفہ تماشا یی
 در بادۂ امروزم' کیفیت فردایی
 پنہاں بہ ضمیر من' صد عالم رعنا یی
 صد کوب غلطان یی' صد گنبد خضرا یی
 من کسوت انسانم پیراہن یزدانم

تقدیر فسوں من' تدبیر فسوں تو
 تو عاشق لیلای من' دشت جنوں تو
 چوں روح روان پاکم' از چند و چگون تو
 تو راز دروں من' من راز دروں تو
 از جان تو پیدایم در جان تو پنہانم

من رہرو تو منزل' من مزرع و تو حاصل
 تو ساز صد آہنگ' تو گرمی این محفل
 آوارہ آب و گل' در یاب مقام دل
 گنجیدہ بہ جامے بیی' این قلم رے ساحل
 از موج بلند تو سر بر زدہ طوفانم

PROGRESSIVE TRENDS IN IQBAL'S THOUGHT

I

WHAT does "Progressivism" mean when applied to Iqbal's thought? Is it fair to attach any particular label to the ideas of a great creative thinker like him who touches life dynamically at so many different points? I believe it is necessary to bring out this aspect of Iqbal's thought clearly, because there is, otherwise, a definite danger—it is not imaginary or far-fetched—that certain reactionary groups might try to annex Iqbal to their school and exploit his great popularity and his appeal to youth for their own purposes. Poetry, in particular—like the scriptures—offers scope for a variety of interpretations and it is often possible to put up an apparently plausible case in favour of any particular interpretation by quoting individual verses torn from their context. But, in fairness to any significant poet or thinker, it is necessary to assess his poetry and his ideas and to assess their trends as a whole. Otherwise in our effort to prove a particular thesis we run the risk of distorting—consciously or unconsciously—the poet's real meaning and his

attitude to life. Iqbal faces to-day a two-fold danger. On the one hand, are his reactionary admirers who themselves are entirely out of tune with the progressive forces and stand in the way of the creation of a new world and they seek, consciously or unconsciously, to conceal the fire and the dynamism of his message for their own narrow or selfish ends. On the other hand, there is a group of progressives and pseudo-progressives, whose complacency far outstrips their intelligence and who consider Iqbal to be a reactionary whose poetry does not come to grips with life but shirks its bitter realities. It is, in their words, a "poetry of escape." They base this accusation on the grounds that he is the poet of a particular religious community, that instead of addressing himself to the people of India as a whole he confined his message to the Muslims, that he seeks to revive a culture and an age that are past beyond recall and that he looks for the salvation of his community—as of the entire world—in a book which is more than thirteen centuries old! It is necessary to defend this great poet from this attack which comes from two diametrically opposite directions and the best defence is obviously the elucidation of his true attitude towards some of the great issues of the present age. For, in so far as the misunderstanding on the part of either group is genuine, it is due to their failure to grasp the real significance of his teaching.

Of course, against deliberate misrepresentation or "cussedness" there is no remedy, and against stupidity, as against obstinacy, the very gods are powerless.

This does not, however, answer the first question that I raised: What is Progressivism? In what sense is Iqbal a progressive thinker and poet? It is necessary to define the term with some precision before venturing to label him with it. But it is by no means easy to do so, since no one will willingly admit to being a reactionary rather than a progressive, one is always apt to identify one's own opinions, ideas and prejudices with progress and condemn as reactionary all that is opposed or repugnant to them. To a political "radical", a "conservative" is a reactionary who stands in the way of a reconstruction of the social order on a proper basis: to a conservative a radical is a hot-headed fool who makes "gradual and ordered progress" impossible through his impatience and disregard of "realities"; to a "liberal" both are mistaken as they are deprived of that essential quality of "balanced thought" which alone makes progress possible and worth having. Thus every one claims to be "progressive" and accuses all others, who do not agree with his own particular point of view, of being reactionary and, consequently, it becomes impossible to define this term except with reference to one's own mental and moral attitudes to life. I cannot certainly

claim to be immune from the possibility of such personal attitudes affecting my judgment, however conscientiously I might try to retain an objectivity of outlook. Nor do I consider that to be entirely a disadvantage because, having defined one's terms, one can go confidently ahead knowing that there is no likelihood of confusing the issues or misleading the reader. If I call Iqbal a "progressive" it is in this sense and none other; one may take it or leave it or quarrel with my definition but it will obviate the possibility of an entirely different meaning of "Progressivism" being foisted on Iqbal, or read into my ideas.

In what sense, then, do I wish to present Iqbal as a progressive thinker? While the full implications of the term will only become clear as the argument of this chapter unfolds and I cannot anticipate the whole of it in these prefatory remarks, let me try to clarify the main implications of the term. I am of the opinion that the most important quality comprised within its rich content is a breadth of outlook and sympathy which enables one to look beyond one's own individual problems and interest to the wider problems of the group, the community and the society to which one belongs. But it is not merely a capacity to be able to "visualise" these problems, important as that undoubtedly is, but also such a turning of one's sympathies and emotions that one would share to the fullest the interests, the joys and the

sorrows of these larger groups and respond as quickly and readily to them as he does to his own. His loyalties and sympathies are not cramped by any narrow, racial, geographical or national boundaries but are generous enough to envelop the whole of mankind within their sweep. "All true progress," someone has significantly remarked, "is a progress in charity," for that alone is the measure of a person's humanity, *i.e.*, of how far he has travelled on the road which leads to the cultivation of a genuinely cultured personality. There have, no doubt, been many other forms of progress in the history of the human race and some of them have been greatly accelerated in modern times—progress in productive capacity, speed, in Science, in armaments. But these can be allied,—and have been allied,—with inhuman greed, exploitation, cruelty and injustice and, when the steering wheel of progress is held by men obsessed with these obnoxious qualities, scientific and technical progress becomes merely an active instrument for adding to the misery and destruction of mankind. That is why, if progress in charity and understanding does not go side by side with technical progress, the latter becomes a menace to human happiness and a fatal obstruction in the way of a decent life. Thus it ceases to be "progress" in any reasonable sense of the word. Now one can, therefore, rightly claim to be "progressive" till he

has acquired this catholicity of outlook, this attitude of charity, this capacity to rise above narrow sectional and even national interests wherever they come into conflict with wider human interests. To my mind all that tends towards narrowness, parochialism and intolerance, all that divides man from man and leads to oppression and conflict is detrimental to true progress. On the other hand, all those forces and movements which aim at the enlargement of the life of thought and emotion, which break down stupid barriers of prejudice and misunderstanding, that stress the infinite value of the human personality as such—all of them contribute to the progressive orientation of mankind towards true culture, and there is no greater sin against the "Purpose of God for Man" than the obstruction of these forces in their normal activity.

From this central characteristic follows another quality which is an inevitable corollary of a tolerant, all-embracing humanity—a passion for social justice. If life were viewed from the social angle, the one supreme unchanged objective of all great benefactors of mankind—social workers, religious leaders and political crusaders—would seem to be the establishment of such social conditions as will ensure for all individuals and for all groups and classes protection from exploitation and injustice. The history of man is replete with gloomy accounts of how strong individuals and groups have

striven to deprive their fellow men and women of their legitimate rights—the rich exploiting the poor, the men tyrannising over women, the stronger nations subjugating the weaker ones and brute force in its various forms tending to suppress the free and creative expression of human spirit. The great international wars, fought to deprive people of their liberty, the disgraceful religious persecutions which considered it meritorious to torture people in the name of the God of Love, the old system of slavery, the modern class conflict, born of the capitalist system, which is a protest against the monopoly of wealth and privileges for a few at the cost of the many—all these are various aspects of the great epic of social injustice running through the pages of history. It is against these manifestly unjust and unrighteous social manifestations that the finest spirits have fought in all the ages and it is these people alone—always luminous minority struggling against a dark background of tyranny, oppression and injustice—who can be considered progressive in the true sense of the word. Never was there greater need than to-day for this crusade which aims at storming the citadels of vested interests, because the technical and commercial advances of modern times have crystallised and exaggerated beyond measure the hold of these vested interests so that extreme wealth and extreme poverty, with their sinister implications, stand out in sharper and starker contrast

to-day than ever before. No one can, therefore, claim to be a progressive unless he identifies himself in an unmistakable manner with this striving for social justice, unless there is, in him, something of the crusader's fire and imagination at every manifestation of injustice wherever it may be found and unless he has the courage to express it unambiguously in words or action, I say word *or* action, because the manner of expression would differ in different individuals—a writer or a poet or a litterateur, as such, can express himself only in words while a political or a social worker has to give expression to his faith in deeds. This is, therefore, a sure criterion or touchstone for testing the *bona fides* or the genuineness of a progressive—is he or is he not sincerely identified with the forces striving for social justice? A reactionary is primarily a person who stands in the way of all social reconstruction tending to this end.

There is one other quality which characterises the true progressive—he is essentially and fundamentally an optimist, a believer in the unexplored potentialities of the human nature and the ultimate growing triumph of good over evil. He is not, indeed, an optimist in a facile and self-complacent way, one who thinks that the world is wound up like a clock work which must move forward towards the goal of progress inevitably and irresistibly without a persistent and ceaseless effort on the part of all

practicality. Genuine optimism does not short-sightedly ignore the hard and ugly facts of life; it does not seek consolation in any form of escape. It states the grim realities of life squarely in the face and plans intelligently for coping with them, buoyed up by an inextinguishable faith in the ultimate triumph of sanity, reason and moral ideals and determined to better the psychological and material conditions of his human and natural environment for the purpose. Without such faith, all effort is like the flapping of a caged bird who sees his doom and knows that he cannot avoid it. Pessimism implies a lack of faith and consequently a loss of energy, and wherever pessimism creeps in insidiously there can be no steady and persistent effort in behalf of any great cause worthy of our best aspirations.

These are, then, the three qualities which genuine "Progressivism" postulates—a faith in the ultimate goodness of human nature and the consequent belief that life is worth living and striving for; a breadth of outlook and sympathy which refuses to be bound by racial, geographical and sectarian differences and an active identification of the self with the causes of social justice and a willingness to strive for them to the best of one's ability. I shall now proceed to examine some aspects of Iqbal's thought to see how far his attitude to life and the message running through his poetry are in harmony with progressivism as I have defined it.

II

What is Iqbal's theory of Literature and Art ? What part does he expect them to play in the complex web of life's activities ? Is he a reactionary and an escapist who looks upon poetry and art as constituting an "ivory tower" in which one can find a refuge from the "madding crowd's ignoble strife" and lead a life of cultured ease ? Or, does he advocate a dynamic view of Art as an integral efflorescence of life, aiming at its quickening and revivification ? Before examining his views let us try to analyse the "progressive" view of literature as given by progressive writers in India and other countries. They contend, quite rightly, that literature is not, and should not be regarded as, a leisure pastime for the idle rich, as yet another form of distraction for their empty brains and superficial feelings: It is rather a form of creative activity which seeks to give expression to the highest aspirations of man and to the significant story of his joys and sorrows, his failures and triumphs, his emotional frustrations and his intellectual victories. In all great literature, one can hear the heart-beat of a people—not only of the particular people to whom the writer belongs but the throbbing heart of humanity itself. It may be that the great poet or artist is primarily concerned with elucidation and interpretation of experiences which he has gained in his special social milieu ;

in fact it *must* be so if his experience is to ring true and genuine. But his greatness consists in being able to raise the particular to the general, to see in the sufferings and struggles, the joys and sorrows, the emotional conflicts and problems of the particular people that he portrays the great story of man's failure and triumphs, his constant yearning for the highest ends and his repeated fall from grace. This he can do only if his heart-strings are tuned to vibrate with all significant experience, to respond to all that is distinctively human, irrespective of its colour or geography. A great Greek poet, whose heart was vibrantly alive to the appeal of beauty, had once remarked that wherever there was a beautiful woman in the world, she was like a dear relation to him. But a progressive writer must go beyond the purely æsthetic appeal and learn to regard as kin all who suffer sorrows or injustice. Wherever tyranny and oppression restrict the freedom of the human spirit and arrest its self-expression, there is territory for the progressive writer to annex and make his own, using his winged words to arouse indignation and protest against all such human deprivations. In this crusade for justice he does not pay homage to the idols of race or colour or creed or country, for there is room in his heart for all mankind. He is the natural friend and ally of all the forces that liberate the heart and the mind and awaken his nobility and his respect for man as man.

He serves as the mouthpiece of these forces, not, indeed, through direct and crude propaganda or exhortation but by the more subtle and powerful appeal that writing, inspired by sincerity and informed with intelligence, can make to the human heart.

Let us now examine the position of Iqbal against this background and see whether he is an escapist—as some short-sighted “progressive” critics have alleged—or a creative and dynamic writer who links up literature with life. Art and Literature, according to Iqbal, are powerful agencies for quickening the dormant energies and potentialities of a people, mirroring their past, depicting their present and pointing to their future. They are concerned not with the purely temporary or ephemeral aspects of individual or collective experience but with what is genuinely significant and abiding. The ultimate objective of Literature and Art, he contends, is the “Life Eternal,” (حیات ابدی)—the life of the Spirit which alone gives meaning and reality to our everyday efforts and activities and not this fleeting breath which goes out quickly like a quivering flame. This is how he expresses this truth in his characteristically dynamic and straightforward style :

اے اہل نظر ذوق نظر خوب ہے لیکن
جوشے کی حقیقت کو نہ دیکھے وہ نظر کیا

مقصود ہنر سوز حیات ابدی ہے
یہ ایک نفس یا دو نفس مثل شرر کیا
جس سے دل دریا متلاطم نہیں ہوتا
اے قطرۂ نیساں وہ صدف کیا وہ گہر کیا
شاعر کی نوا ہو کہ مغنی کا نفس ہو
جس سے چمن افسردہ ہو وہ باد ساگر کیا
یہ معجزہ دنیا میں ابھرتی نہیں قومیں
جو ضربِ کلیسی نہیں رکھتا وہ ہنر کیا

Having indicated the objective, he goes on to point out how poetry can throb with this life-giving power and become a formative force. He admonishes poets and writers against a life of ease and retirement, of laments over the past and pessimism about the future, of melancholy contemplation of their own limited emotional experiences; he exhorts them to throw themselves whole-heartedly into the life of active struggle going on around them. "Do you desire to stamp your impression on life? Then learn to participate in its manifold activities courageously," he seems to say. In the "Secrets of the Self" he phrases his stirring message to the poet in these moving words:

اٹے میان کیسبہ ات نقد سخن
بر عیار زندگی او را بزَن
مدتے غلطیدہ اندر حریر
خوبہ کرپاس درشتے ہم بگیر
خویش را بر ریگ سوزاں ہم بزَن
قوٹہ اندر چشمہ زمزم بزَن

مثل بلبل فوق شیون تا کجا
 در چمن زاران نشیمن تا کجا
 اے ہما از یمن دامت ارجمند
 آشیا نے ساز بر کوہ بلند
 تا شوی در خورد پیکار حیات
 جسم و جانست سوزد از نار حیات

If thou hast the coin of poesy in thy purse,
 Rub it on the touchstone of life;
 For a long time thou hast turned about on a bed of silk:
 Now accustom thyself to rough cotton!
 Now throw thyself on the burning sand.
 And plunge into the fountain of Zemzem!
 How long wilt thou fain lament like the nightingale?
 How long make thine abode in gardens?
 O thou whose auspicious snare would do honour to the
 Phoenix.
 Build a nest on the high mountains;
 That thou mayst be fit for life's battle,
 That thy body and soul may burn in life's fire!*

The East has for long been content with taking the second place and has failed to assert itself powerfully in the shaping of the socio-political, as well as the cultural life of the country. In the general decadence that has swept over the peoples of the East, it is not only their statesmen and politicians who have become decadent but also their artists, their poets, their writers and their scholars. Instead of being in the vanguard of the fight for freedom and justice, they have become reactionaries, prostituting their Art and intellect to making slavery and cowardice acceptable and attractive. They preach the gospel of safety and teach them "the tricks of the cowardly stag"

instead of extolling the courage of the lion and the desire to "live dangerously" for worthy ends.

شاعر بیوی ہیں پیدا علما بیوی حکما بیوی
خالی نہیں قوموں کی غلامی کا زمانہ
مقصد ہے ان اللہ کے بندوں کا مگر ایک
ہر ایک ہے گو شرح معانی میں یگانہ
بہتر ہے کہ شیروں کو سکھادیں رم آہو
باقی نہ رہے شیر کی شیری کا فساد
کرتے ہیں غلاموں کو غلامی پہ رضا مند
تاویل مسائل کو بھاتے ہیں بہانہ

Philosophers, poets, scholars, all bound in the period of a nation's slavery; it is certainly not an empty age.

But all these good people have only one object though they are past masters in the art of interpretation!

(And what is the object?) "It is better to teach the lions to flee like the deer and thus consign to oblivion the tradition of the lion's courage."

They pretend to interpret problems (of art or religion or philosophy) but are really preoccupied with making slavery acceptable to the slaves!

Is it fair to characterise such a poet as reactionary? He addresses the poet of the East, whose morale has been sapped by long and gloomy years of slavery, in these pointed words:

مشرق کی فیستار میں ہے محتاج نفس نے
شاعر تیرے سینے میں نفس ہے کہ نہیں ہے
تاثیر غلامی سے خودی جس کی ہوئی نرم
اچھی نہیں اس قوم کے حق میں عجبی لے
شیشے کی صراحی ہو کہ مٹی کا سبو ہو
شمشیر کی مانند ہو تیزی میں تیری ہے

ایسی کوئی دنیا نہیں افلاک کے نیچے
 بے معرکہ ہاتھ آئے جہاں تخت جم و کے
 ہر لحظہ نیا طور نئی برق تجلی
 اللہ کرے مرحلہ شوق نہ ہو طے

Thus the proper attitude to life which Iqbal advocates—not only for ordinary men and women but also for poets and artists—is that of struggle for worthy causes, of shunning ease and comfort which demoralise and of choosing activity which is the proper medium for self-expression. Great art is not born in a mood of easy, self-complacence as an expression of the fleeting emotional indulgences of the artist ; it is the fruit of the tears, the anguish and the travail which fall to the lot of every true artist who is in tune with the spirit of humanity. In his immortal poem “Cordova” (قرطبہ) he gives expression to this deeper, more poignant significance of the artist’s work :

رنگ ہو یا خشبت و سنگ، چنگ ہو یا حرف و صوت
 معجزہ فن کی ہے خون جگر سے نمود
 قطرہ خون جگر سل کو بنا تا ہے دل
 خون جگر سے صدا سوز و سرور و سرود
 نقش ہیں سب نا تمام خون جگر کے بغیر
 نغمہ ہے سودائے خام خون جگر کے بغیر

This power to inspire and enthuse can come to the poet and artist only when he does not shun the “good fight” going around him, but is prepared courageously to throw himself

into it. This theme is crucial to Iqbal's thought and recurs again and again :

میلارا بزمِ سما جانی کہ آنجہ
 قہا طے ہوندا کائناتی نام نہاد کیست
 بددوا غنا و با سخمی در آید
 حیاتِ حلو دایں شود مایوس است
 and

سکندر با خضر خورشید نکلتے گفت
 شریکِ سوز و سماںِ ماحم و تیر شو
 تو ایی حنک از فکرِ مومند تانی
 بیدار اندر نسوز و زنده توش

An Indian writer, belonging to the new group of progressive writers—apparently unable to understand the true significance of progressivism and carried away by its superficial slogans—has accused Iqbal's poetry of being "reactionary." His contention is that this poetry is escapist : it tries to run away from the realities of life ; instead of awakening and stimulating our critical faculties and strengthening the forces of progress, it invites us to a life of passivity and inaction and is, therefore, retrograde. He also suggests that Indian literature has been greatly influenced by Iqbal but his influence has been narcotic, making it "sleepy" and cut off from the currents of life. Viewed against the foregoing interpretation of Iqbal's position, this criticism is amusingly absurd. It is probably inspired by the fact that Iqbal's progressivism is wedded to his religious thought—for he draws his inspiration mainly from the teachings of

Islam—while this particular school regards all that is connected with religion as *ipso facto* obscurantist and reactionary. It is a curious irony that a group which starts out with the avowed object of being open-minded and challenging every kind of narrowness is itself betrayed into a most deplorable type of narrow-mindedness which sticks to the "letter that killeth and rejects the spirit that keepeth alive." In order to substantiate what I have said, I shall quote what Iqbal wrote as far back as 1916, while elucidating and interpreting a remark made by the Holy Prophet regarding the poetry of a great Arab poet. In pondering over these remarks, it is well to remember that they were made long before the progressive literature movement was even born in India, when, even in European countries, it was a nascent movement groping its way forward somewhat uncertainly.

"The ultimate end of all human activity is life glorious, powerful, exuberant. All human art must be subordinated to this final purpose, and the value of everything must be determined in reference to its life-yielding capacity. The highest art is that which awakens our dormant will-force and nerves us to face the trials of life manfully. All that brings drowsiness and makes us shut our eyes to Reality around, on the mastery of which alone Life depends, is a message of decay and death. There should be no opium-eating in Art. The dogma of Art for the

sake of Art is a clever invention of decadence to cheat us out of life and power."

III

Let us now turn to the specific charges brought forward against Iqbal by his adverse critics, and see how far they can stand a dispassionate examination. It has been contended that in its later phases, Iqbal's poetry ignored India and the Indian problem altogether and addressed itself exclusively to the world of Islam, presenting its message in religious and, therefore, exclusive terms. It will be noticed that this is a twofold criticism—firstly a falling away from grace in so far as he failed to pay homage to the idols of nationalism and patriotism and, secondly, the adoption of a religious approach for the sake of appealing to the Muslim world. What is the actual position? A study of Iqbal's poetry will show that it is wrong and untrue to say that in his later writings Iqbal does not evince a true love for the land of his birth or a keenness for its progress and liberation while his earlier poetry vibrates with this emotion. Actually, even his last two collections contain some of the most moving and thought-provoking poems, giving lively expression to his deep-rooted love and solicitude for India. But there is one difference which must be understood and appreciated in this

connection. In his earliest poem like many lesser poets—but more fruitfully and with greater felicity of expression—Iqbal also extols the outward features of the country, *e.g.*, the Himalayas, which are no doubt a most important geographical feature but are also a geographical accident which might have happened, as it were, to any other land. But as his vision and his intellectual grasp of the fundamentals of human culture and destiny widened, he began to take a view which was at once deeper and more far-reaching. His Poetry and Philosophy refused to be cribbed and confined within any particular geographical boundaries ; they embraced within their purview the whole of humanity, past, present and future. He devoted himself to elucidating the real meaning of the great cultural and spiritual struggle of man which has been going on throughout history, in spite of many and recurring set-backs. His love for his country and his appreciation of the rôle it should play in the world was also visualised against this wider background and he was now naturally more concerned with its inner spirit than its outward landscape, its gorgeous procession of seasons and its geographical and topographical characteristics. This development really illustrates a deepening and enriching patriotism and not its weakening or rejection. So we find that his later poetry breathes the same spirit of love for India, the same passionate urge to see it play a worthy

role in the comity of nations and it is inspired by the same conviction that this is not possible without freedom. In the *Zarb-i-Kalim*, his last collection of Urdu verses, there is a small poem entitled گلہ (Complaint) which gives vigorous and indignant expression to this burning conviction :

معلوم کسے ہند کی تقدیر کہ اب تک
بیچارہ کسی تاج کا تابندہ نگین ہے
دھقان ہے کسی قبر کا اگلا ہوا مردہ
بوسیدہ کفن جسکا ابلی زیر زمیں ہے
حار بلی گرو غیر بدن بلی گرو غیر
افسوس کہ باقی نہ مکاں ہے نہ مکین ہے
یورپ کی غلامی پہ رضامند ہوا تو
مہجہ کو تو گلہ تہجد سے ہے یورپ سے نہیں ہے

Who knows the fate of India which is still but a bright
jewel in some other crown ;
The peasant is like a corpse exhumed from its grave, its
shroud still buried underground !
The body and the soul are alike mortgaged to others—
neither the house nor the house-owner remains.
You have reconciled yourself to the slavery of the West;
my grudge is against you, not against West !

Can that be bettered as an indictment of the Western domination of India, political and spiritual ? And this is by no means a solitary example ; his works are replete with courageous protests against all that tends to enslave the people and to arrest their social and psychological liberation. His last Persian *Masnawi* entitled " What Should the Nations of the East Do " (پس چہ باید کرد اے اقوام شرق) is a stirring call

to all the Eastern nations to throw off the thraldom of the West and rediscover their true soul and their real national culture. In this *Masnawi* he laments over the mutual dissensions which have shattered the unity of India (اشکے چند بر افتراق ہندیان) and made it possible for strangers to come and "use our clay for building palaces for themselves":

اے ہمالہ اے اٹک اے رود گنگ
زیستن تا کے چناں ہے آب و رنگ
پیر مرداں از فراست ہے نصیب
نوجواناں از محبت ہے نصیب
شرق و غرب آزاد ما نہ بچیر غیر
خشت ما سرمایہ تعمیر غیر
ہندیان با یک دگر آویختند
فتنہ ہائے کہنہ باز انگیختند
تا فرنگی قومے از مغرب زمیں
ثالث آمد در نراع کفر و دی
کس نداند جلوه آب از سراب
انقلاب! اے انقلاب!! اے انقلاب!!!

O Himalaya, O Attock, O Ganges, how long will you exist like this—without colour, without lustre?

The old men of this land are devoid of intelligence, the young ones are devoid of love;

The East and the West are alike free but we are still slaves; others use our clay for erecting their own buildings!

The people of India entangled themselves in dissensions and revived old controversies,

Till a nation from the West descended on them, playing the arbiter in the dissension between faith and unfaith!

No one distinguishes the mirage from the rippling waters;

Oh for a revolution to change all this!

Is it fair to say that a poet who writes with such a pain-racked pen about the conflicts

which disfigure our national life is devoid of the sentiment of patriotism ? Reference might also be made to another beautiful poem in *Zarb-i-Kalim* entitled شعاع امید (Ray of Hope) in which he speaks pointedly of his determination to light up the darkness in which his motherland is shrouded. The poem is really a challenge to the poet and the artist not to seek refuge in escape. The underlying idea is symbolically expressed. The Sun is disgusted with the world of men and its pettiness, its cruelties and its injustices, and invites its rays, scattered all over the earth, to retire from this abode of sorrow and find rest within its bosom. All the rays accept the invitation and begin to retreat—all but one lively impatient, eager ray which rejects the offer because it has made up its mind to fight against the forces of darkness enveloping India and the whole of the East. This is how the ray puts her case with love and pride and solicitude is ringing in each word :

اک شوخ کرن شوخ مثال نگہ حور
 آرام سے فارغ صفت جوہر سیماب
 بولی کہ مجھے رخصت تنویر عطا ہو
 جب تک نہ ہو مشرق کا ہر اک ذرہ جہانتاب
 چھوڑوں گی نہ میں ہند کی تاریک فضا کو
 جب تک نہ اٹھیں خواب سے مردان گراں خواب
 خاور کی امیدوں کا یہی خاک ہے مرکز
 اقبال کے اشکوں سے یہی خاک ہے سیراب

چشم مہ و پرویں ہے اسی خاک سے روشن
یہ خاک کہ ہے جس کا خرف ریزہ درناں
اس خاک سے اٹھے ہیں وہ غواص معانی
جن کے لٹے ہر بکر پر آشوب ہے پایاب

.....

جس ساز کے نغموں سے حرارت تھی دلوں میں
محفل کا وہی ساز ہے بیگانہ مضراب
بت خانے کے دروازہ پہ سوتا ہے برہمن
تقدیر کو روتا ہے مسلمان کہ محراب
مشرق سے ہو بیزار نہ مغرب سے حذر کر
فطرت کا اشارہ ہے کہ ہر شب کو سحر کر

And what is this exceptional ray? It is, of course, the Poet of the East, Iqbal, himself. Is it fair to charge with indifference a poet who speaks with such sincerity and affection of his motherland, and who shows such eagerness in its service? But Iqbal has the vision and the intelligence to distinguish between patriotism—which is the love of all that is good and great and worthy in the cultural achievements of a people—and nationalism which with the exclusive, sovereign national state as its political expression has become the greatest single factor militating against peace, freedom and justice in the world. He is essentially international and humanitarian in his attitude and rejects unhesitatingly the claims of the nation-state to regiment and regulate the ideas, feelings and loyalties of its subjects. For this

thinkers who hold similar views lies in their respective approach. Thinkers like Russell, Wells, Shaw or Joad and political parties like the socialists reject the nationalistic basis of human society because they have come to the conclusion that, in this world of diminishing distances and increasing intercourse, which science and technology have completely transformed, national exclusiveness does not pay; it results in class conflict, trade rivalries, wars and imperialistic exploitations which reduce the sum total of human happiness with alarming efficiency. Iqbal's approach, on the other hand, is moral and religious, spiritual and humanitarian. For him any doctrine which bases itself on exploitation and hatred and fails to appreciate the true and essential humanity embedded in the heart of man, is unacceptable, because it militates against the growth and expansion of his spiritual self. He puts forth this point forcefully and lucidly in his Lectures and a study of the following extract will show how his approach to, and his view of, the problem is more profound and fundamental, because it takes its cue from the essential facts of man's inner nature rather than the immediate changing complexion of the socio-political environment :

“ Both nationalism and atheistic socialism, at least in the present state of human adjustments, must draw upon the psychological forces or hate, suspicion, and resentment which

tend to impoverish the soul of man and close up his hidden sources of spiritual energy. Neither the technique of medieval mysticism nor nationalism nor atheistic socialism can cure the ills of a despairing humanity. Surely the present moment is one of great crisis in the history of modern culture. The modern world stands in need of biological renewal. And religion, which in its higher manifestations is neither dogma, nor priesthood, nor ritual, can alone ethically prepare the modern men for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern Science necessarily involves, and restore to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter."

What is expressed here in the sober and emphatic language of Philosophy also finds expression in his poetry in many ever varying but ever beautiful forms.

یہی مقصود فطرت ہے یہی رمز مسلمانی
 اخوت کی جہانگیری محبت کی فراوانی
 بتان رنگ و خوں کو توڑ کر ملت میں گم ہو جا
 نہ تورانی رہے باقی نہ ایرانی نہ افغانی

What is the ultimate end of Nature and the inner secret of Islam?—the universality of brotherhood and the abundance of love!

Shatter the idols of blood and colour and race and lose thyself in the *millat*!

Abolish all distinctions between the Turanians, the Persians and the Afghans!

This theme recurs again and again :

ہوس نے کر دیا ہے ٹکڑے ٹکڑے نوع انسان کو
 اخوت کا بیاں ہو جا محبت کی زبان ہو جا
 یہ ہندی وہ خراسانی یہ افغانی وہ تورانی
 تو اے شرمندہ ساحل اچھل کر بیکراں ہو جا
 غبار آلودہ رنگ و نسب ہی بال و پر تیرے
 تو اے مرغ حرم اڑنے سے پہلے پرفشاں ہو جا

Greed has split up mankind into warring camps ; so speak
 the language of love and teach the lesson of brotherhood !
 What are all these distinctions—Indians, Afghans, Turanians,
 Khorasanis? Thou art bound to the shore ; leap
 forward into limitless freedom !

Thy wings are overlaid with the dust of colour and race ;
 Bird of the *Haram*, shed these wings before thy upward
 flight !

He points out emphatically how the worship of the false gods of nationalism, capitalism and their unholy offspring, Imperialism, has enslaved Europe within bonds of its own making and sounded the death-knell of its great civilisation.

ابھی تک آدمی صید زبون شہریاری ہے
 قیامت ہے کہ انسان نوع انسان کا شکاری ہے
 نظر کو خیرہ کرتی ہے چمک تہذیب حاضر کی
 یہ صناعی مگر جھوٹے نگون کی ریزہ کاری ہے
 وہ حکمت ناز تھا جس پر خردمندان مغرب کو
 ہوس کے پنڈجہ خونیں میں تیغ کارزاری ہے
 تدبیر کی فسوں کاری سے محکم ہو نہیں سکتا
 جہاں میں جس تمدن کی بنا سرمایہ داری ہے

Man is still a miserable prey to exploitation and imperialism ; is it not a grievous calamity that man should prey on man ?

The glitter of the modern civilisation dazzles the eyesight;
but this is merely an artistry of false beads !
Science, on which prided the wise men of the West, is
but a sword of battle in the blood-stained grip of greed ;
No magic of political policy can strengthen a civilisation
which rests on the quick-sands of capitalism !

This should effectively lay the ghost of the un-intelligent criticism that Iqbal is not a patriot because he has the vision and the intellectual clarity to reject the spurious claims of aggressive nationalism and advocates a sane and humane view of the principles which should govern the relations of nations and groups inhabiting this world, which is so irrationally planned.

Then there is the closely allied criticism that Iqbal's approach to the problems of humanity is a religious approach and that by adopting it he has limited the appeal of his poetry and thought only to the Muslim world and thereby restricted the scope of his message as well as his art. Iqbal would have cheerfully pleaded guilty to the first part of the charge because he did undoubtedly find the deepest sources of his inspiration in the teachings of Islam and some of the greatest Muslim thinkers. But to argue from that admission that this is either a proof of his artistic failure or of the restriction of the universal significance and value of his thought is to misunderstand completely the nature and psychology of a creative genius. Iqbal devoted himself undoubtedly to interpreting—with intelligence and originality—the social, political and moral values of Islam

to the Muslims as well as to the rest of mankind. Is it fair and reasonable to class him as a reactionary or an obscurantist on that score? Those who take this curiously narrow-minded view forget the fundamental fact that every great writer, thinker and poet is bound to derive his inspiration and the characteristic colour and texture of his thought from the particular culture and civilisation in which he has lived, moved and had his being—his spiritual even more than the physical being. No creative and original mind can subsist on a foreign culture or philosophy or illumine its significant personal activity with borrowed and uncongenial lights. It is only after he has assimilated within the depths of his own being the riches of the cultural, religious and philosophic thought of his people and let his creative mind work on it critically, intuitively and appreciatively that he can hope to attain that stage of intellectual maturity and independence, possibly of *Ijtihad*, which is necessary for attempting any new interpretation or offering any fruitful guidance. Of course, it is essential for such a mind that it should not remain content with this intellectual heritage from the past but should actively and broad-mindedly welcome the newer movements of thought and action and the newer developments in the field of knowledge and social activity. It is only then that he can interpret the past in the light of the present and blaze a trail through

the darkness in which the future lies embedded. Iqbal fulfils these two conditions *par excellence*. On the one hand, he has studied deeply and reverently the teachings of Islamic religion and philosophy, and assimilated the spirit underlying the Quran and the Prophet's interpretation of the Quran as well as the teachings of great mystics, philosophers and poets like Rumi. On the other hand, he has kept abreast of modern Science, Philosophy and Sociological thought and movements and pondered over their true significance. This is what makes his interpretation of Islam—and of religion in the wider sense—a refreshing contrast to that of a half-educated, fanatical *mulla* who has been confined to the study of books on theology and religious jurisprudence and who has let all the vital and vigorous movements of the age pass by unnoticed. These critics of Iqbal have failed to appreciate his conception of religion and its place in life: that it is a force that liberates, not a force that imprisons. Iqbal's religion—of which he finds the best and most congenial example in Islam—demands breadth of vision and tolerance and sets free the dynamic and dangerous power of thought—which religious fanatics have always sought to suppress—because restrictions on this the most precious of God's great gifts to men are a denial of his distinctive significance in the scheme of the Universe. He disagrees violently and fundamentally with those who would make religion a means for

producing in people a false sense of contentment or fatalism or the desire for withdrawal from the bracing struggle of life. His religion is not "the opium of the people" as communist ideology regards all religions to be. It is essentially a religion of power, challenging men and women to the conquest of the Universe, not advising them to adopt a policy of retreat or renunciation. This is how he criticises pungently the false conception of religion :

اے مرد خدا تجھے کو وہ قوت نہیں حاصل
جا بیٹھ کسی غار میں اللہ کو کر یاد
مسکینی و متکومی و نومیدئی جاوید
جس کا یہ تصوف ہو وہ اسلام کر ایجاد
ملا کو جو ہے ہند میں سجدے کی اجازت
ناداں یہ سمجھتا ہے کہ اسلام ہے آزاد

O Man of God ! Thou art bereft of power ; go and seek
recluse in some isolated den and recite thy prayers.
Go and invent some new Islam which teaches false humi-
lity, submission to slavery and eternal pessimism !
As the *mulla* is permitted to offer his prayers in this coun-
try, he ignorantly imagines that Islam itself is free !

Elsewhere he gives his own conception of true religion and contrasts it, in his own inimitable and epigrammatic style with the false conception that is generally prevalent :—

یا وسعت افلاک میں تکبیر مسلسل
یا خاک کے آغوش میں تسبیح و مناجات
وہ مذہب مردان خود آگاہ و خدا مست
یہ مذہب ملا و جمادات و نباتات

Religion is either [the exalting of the Name of the Lord in the vast expanses of the heavens or the (priests') resigned and mournful prayers at nights in the lap of the earth

The former is the religion of self-conscious, God-intoxicated men ; the latter is the religion of the priests and the plants and earth-rooted stones !

Iqbal realised with a fine keenness of insight that the two great forces which can *jointly* bring about the salvation of this bewildered, storm-tossed and internally rent humanity are Power and Vision : *Power*—which is born of the great modern miracles of Science, technology and industrialism and which man possesses to-day in a more generous measure than ever before,—and *Vision*, which is the priceless gift of Religion to mankind and the fruit of that Intuition or Love or *Is'q* (عشق) which Iqbal considers to be an essential supplement to Intellect. The divorce of Power from Vision, of Science from Religion, of Intellect from Intuition has produced the present tragic situation in the world, when Godless power has ruthlessly trampled over all human rights and decent human values both in the life of individuals and of nations. He, therefore, advocates the acquisition of Power but lays down the condition that this power must be kept in subordination to the principles and values of Religion, which teaches love, sympathy, self-restraint and respect for the human individuality. If this is not done, the forces of greed, hate, violence and exploitation would gain control of this terrific machine, as has actually happened in the case of the great but misguided civilisation of the West. It developed the most magnificent instruments of power which *could* have con-

trolled most of the forces of Nature, pressed them into the service of mankind, and produced peace, plenty and enlightenment. But they were actually dedicated to the nefarious ends of exploitation, destruction and misery. With the eyes of a seer and prophet, Iqbal saw this awful cataclysm gathering force for an irresistible onslaught and warned mankind against it in unambiguous words which were not heeded and though he did not live to see the fulfilment of his dire prophecy, we are a witness to its truth to-day. There is literally *no* hope for mankind unless, out of all this incalculable travail of the spirit and the sufferings and sorrows of the body, is born a new and sincere realisation of the moral and ethical implications of the fact that mankind to-day is a single society, integrated by the forces of science and technology and that there is no escape from the present tangle unless men learn the lesson of love, justice, brotherhood and humanity and sacrifice which true Religion has always taught throughout the ages. The scientists' arrogance and the priests' renunciation of the world are alike stupid and criminal together, they must strive for the good of mankind so that Vision may direct the application of Power.

He also clears up the radical difference between asceticism which he condemns as teaching withdrawal—though it has always been a favourite ivory tower of the priests—and *Faqr* (فقر) which is a vital and dynamic

quality that sharpens the powers of the spirit and enables man to overcome temptations that often waylay and conquer the weak flesh of inferior men. Iqbal's religion stands for "Faqr" (فقر) which may conquer the world but remains unsullied, and rejects asceticism which is, in the ultimate analysis, a counsel either of selfishness or of despair.

میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے
 میں نے اپنے لئے دنیا کو ترک کر دیا ہے

Your Islam is perhaps something entirely different because for you Faqr and asceticism are alike!

The passivity of the ascetic is utterly repugnant to the spirit of Faqr, for the Faqr's goal is ever "world turned!"

Since the Muslim lost this quality of Faqr, he has been deprived both of power and spiritual wealth.

Is it fair to look upon the advocate of this dynamic, power-invested conception of religion as one teaching renunciation or siding with the forces of reaction? Those who fling this gibe at Iqbal are really slaves to certain uncritical preassumptions about terms like religion, progress, reaction, from which they have no mental escape and which they cannot use without bias or with independence of judgment. This is how Iqbal himself sums up the place of religion in the life of the modern man:

"And religion, which in its higher mani-

festations is neither dogma, nor priesthood, nor ritual, can alone ethically prepare the modern man for the burden of the great responsibility which the advancement of modern Science necessarily involves, and restore to him that attitude of faith which makes him capable of winning a personality here and retaining it hereafter. It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whence and whether, that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an inhuman competition, and a civilisation which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values."

Let us now examine the criticism that Iqbal's influence and scope has been cramped by the fact that he addressed himself primarily to the Muslims and gave his message in terms borrowed from Muslim religious thought. This criticism was voiced, amongst others, by the English critic Dickens when Iqbal's *Masnavi* was published for the first time. His opinion was that, though Iqbal's principles and values may be universal, his message lacked universality because it was addressed primarily to the Muslim world. Referring to this criticism, Iqbal had himself explained his view-point thus :

"The object of my Persian *Masnavis* is not to attempt an advocacy of Islam. My real purpose is to look for a better social order and to present a universally acceptable ideal (of life

and action) before the world, but it is impossible for me, in this effort, to outline this ideal, to ignore the social system and values of Islam whose most important objective is to demolish all the artificial and pernicious distinctions of caste, creed, colour and economic status. Islam has opposed vehemently the idea of racial superiority which is the greatest obstacle in the way of international unity and co-operation ; in fact, Islam and racial exclusiveness are utterly antithetical. This racial ideal is the greatest enemy of mankind and it is the duty of all well-wishers of the human race to eradicate it. When I realised that the conception of nationalism based on the differences of race and country, was beginning to overshadow the world of Islam also and that the Muslims were in danger of giving up the universality of their ideal in favour of a narrow patriotism and false nationalism, I felt it my duty, as a Muslim and as a well-wisher of humanity, to recall them back to their true role in the drama of human evolution. No doubt I am intensely devoted to Islam but I have selected the Islamic community as my starting point not because of any national or religious prejudice but because it is the most practicable line of approach to the problem."

Thus whether we look at the matter from the artistic point of view and consider the form of his poetry or examine its content, we cannot but conclude that the

appeal of his poetry and his message is not circumscribed by the fact that he has chosen to clothe them in terms derived from the religion and culture of Islam. In fact, such a view would be repugnant to the entire psychology and spirit of creative work. It would be as unreasonable as to deny the artistic greatness or appeal of Shakespeare and Goethe because the former's art and portraiture derives their inspiration from the English genius, and the latter has used colours, peculiar to the German genius, for the expression of his inimitable artistry, while the leaven of Christian culture enriches the art of both. In a letter which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru wrote to Maulvi Abdul Haque (Secretary of the Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu) on the occasion of the publication of a special Iqbal commemoration volume of "Urdu" he made out this point with great force and lucidity. This is what he has to say to these critics: "I think it is unfair to describe Iqbal as the poet of Islam only, as it restricts unnecessarily the scope of his influence. It is true that he has written a great deal about Muslim philosophy, Muslim culture and Muslim achievements. But no one has ever sought to limit the appeal of Milton's poetry by calling him the poet of Christianity or the appeal of Kalidas's poetry by calling him the poet of Hinduism; nor have the followers of other religions ever belittled their greatness on this account. If Iqbal writes of the great deeds of

Muslim history and of Muslim cultural achievements, is there any reason why non-Muslims should value him any the less on that account ? ”

In the dominion of art and literature, a largeness of heart is at least as essential for intelligent and helpful criticism as technical knowledge and equipment and, if Iqbal's poetry and thought are approached without preconceived bias, they will be appreciated as perhaps the most valuable contribution that this country has made to progressive literature in the present century.

IV

There is one other quality of Iqbal's thought which displeases and irritates these progressives with a single-track mind—namely, that he does not identify himself with a particular school of political thought, or sacrifices his own freedom of thought for the sake of political loyalty. The old and the new, the reactionary and the progressive, the past and the present, the East and the West are all subject to his critical scrutiny. Wherever there is anything that militates against the free expansion and expression of the human spirit, wherever inferior values threaten to overwhelm or dethrone superior values, wherever there is a danger of petrified political or economic doc-

trines trampling over the ever renaissant spirit of man and casting it into fixed, unchanging moulds, Iqbal is unsparing in his attack. He has studied, with keenness of insight the movements and institutions of the past and the present and appraised them courageously in the light of his fundamental principles and values and directed his criticism impartially to all that was weak or untrue in them. Therefore he is neither a doctrinaire-socialist nor a fascist ; he neither rejects democracy nor worships it blindly. It is true that, generally speaking, he is in favour of the principles and the objectives that underlie democracy and Socialism because they offer a better chance for man's progressive development. But his keen and critical mind is just as impatient of the evils and corruptions, which masquerade under the cloak of democracy and Socialism as it is opposed to the miseries, injustices, and inhuman cruelties which Imperialism and Capitalism bring in their train. Careless of the tender susceptibilities of their zealous partisans, he raised his standard of revolt against excesses in both directions. This not only reveals an independence of mind but is really the only proper attitude for a thinker who is also a poet and an artist, for the poet's sensitiveness and openness of mind are impatient of party bondage ; he is a lover of truth and of man and goes after truth and humanity wherever he finds them. This is how he describes what is in

reality his own mental and emotional make up :

درویشی خدا مست نہ شرقی ہے نہ غربی
گھر میرا نہ دلی نہ صفاہاں نہ سمرقند
کہتا ہوں وہی بات سمجھتا ہوں جسے حق
نے ابلہ مستجد ہوں نہ تہذیب کا فرزند
اپنے بھی خفا مجھ سے ہیں بیگانے بھی ناخوش
میں زہر ہلا لہل کو کبھی کہ نہ سکا قند
مشکل ہے کہ اک بندۂ حق بین و حق اندیش
خاشاک کے تو بے کو کہے کوہ دماوند

The God-intoxicated *Faqir* is neither of the East nor of the West ;

I belong neither to Delhi nor to Isfahan nor to Samarkand
I speak out what I consider to be the truth ;

I am neither fooled by priests nor by the glitter of modern civilisation ;

Friends and strangers are alike displeased with me :

Why ? because I could never confuse poison with sugar !

It is difficult, indeed, that a' truth-knowing, truth-seeing person ;

Should confuse a mound of rubbish with Mount Sinai.

What sort of an attitude towards life does genuine progressiveness postulate? It does not obviously mean an uncritical acceptance of all that is new and modern, of everything that appears to be disruptive of the past that would really be not progressivism but mental blindness ! Nor does it imply that one should reject every idea or principle or value which bears on itself the stamp of the past—that would be fanaticism and merely indicate a lack of historic perspective. This view is so obviously reasonable that I feel apologetic in stressing it, nor

would any one undertake, I suppose, to deny it in *theory*. But in actual practice a narrow interpretation of progressivism does often lead in effect to the adoption of this superficial, indefensible attitude. Iqbal is a thinker with balance and vision ; he appreciates the meaning of history and the tenuous but powerful bonds which bind the past with the present. On the one hand, he has a keen appreciation—no one could have a keener appreciation—of the fact that change is the essence of life, that the world is dynamic not static, that everything is in a state of flux. He has stressed this truth over and over again in his poetry and his *Lectures* and has worked out its implications for individual and group life :

فریب نظر ہے سکون و ثبات
 تڑپتا ہے ہر ذرۂ کائنات
 ٹھہرتا نہیں کاروان وجود
 کہ ہر لحظہ ہے تازہ شاں وجود
 سمجھتا ہے تو راز ہے زندگی
 فقط ذوق پرواز ہے زندگی
 بہت اس نے دیکھے ہیں پست و بلند
 سفر اس کو منزل سے بڑھکر پسند
 سفر زندگی کے لئے برگ و ساز
 سفر ہے حقیقت حضر ہے مجاز

Stability and permanence are mere illusions ;
 Every atom of the Universe is in a constant ferment ;

The caravan of life knows no rest ;
 Its panorama is always assuming new facets ;
 You imagine that life is a hidden secret ?
 No ! life is but a desire to soar aloft !
 It has experienced numerous ups and downs,
 And travel is dearer to it than the goal ;
 Motion is the essential equipment for life
 Motion is reality ; stability is but an illusion !

On the other hand, he has that true historic sense which gives to thought the quality of proportion and balance. He realises that life is not merely change but there are in it elements of permanence and stability also—values and principles which have an abiding significance and which link up the transient life of the individual to Eternity. He weaves, as it were, the texture of his philosophy with the warp and woof of permanence and change. In his *Lectures* he remarks :

" The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. We should not forget that life is not change, pure and simple. It has within it elements of conservation also. While enjoying his creative activity, and always focussing his energies on the discovery of new vistas of life, man has a feeling of uneasiness in the presence of his own unfoldment. In his forward movement he cannot help looking back to his past, and faces his own inward expansion with a certain amount of fear. The spirit of man in its forward movement is restrained by forces which seem to be working in the opposite direction. This is only another way of saying

that life moves with the weight of its own past on its back, and that in any view of social change the value and function of the forces of conservatism cannot be lost sight of. No people can afford to reject their past entirely ; for it is their past that has made their personal identity."

It is idle to expect that a thinker who has this deep insight into the intricate problems of individual and social development would stultify himself by espousing the exclusive doctrines of this or that political party. His work is that of criticism and appraisal—of appreciation of all that is worthy and liberating, — condemnation of all that is hypocritical and narrowing. " Democratic " Europe, intoxicated with exploitation and imperialism, launches its thunderbolts of denunciation against the imperialism of Mussolini. Iqbal is quick to catch the hypocrisy, the logical inconsistency and the irony of this abhorrence and, through the mouth of Mussolini, exposes its hollow pretensions :

میرے سودائے ملوکیت کو ٹھکراتے ہو تم
تم نے کیا توڑے نہیں کمزور قوموں کے زجاج
یہ عجائب شعبدے کسی کی ملوکیت کے ہیں
راجدھانی ہے مگر باقی نہ راجا ہے نہ راج
تم نے لوٹے بے نوا صحرا نشینوں کے خیام
تم نے لوٹی کشت دھقاں تم نے لوٹے تخت و تاج

Why do you condemn my imperialistic ambitions ?

Have you not shattered the egg-shells of many weaker nations ?

Whose imperialism has worked these amazing wonders ?
Rulers and their kingdoms have gone—only their empty
capitals remain !

Have you not plundered the tents of the desert-
dwellers,

The fields of the peasants and the crowns of the rulers ?

Iqbal's heart also throbs with sympathetic indignation for the poor and oppressed worker who has been deprived of the hard-earned fruits of his labour by the stone-hearted capitalist.

زمرد بندہ کرپاس پوش و مہکت کشی
نصیب خواجہ ناکردہ کار رخت حریر
ز خون من چوز لو فرہی کلیسا را
بزور بازوئے من دست سلطنت ہمہ گیر

" The labourer clad in khaddar and dripping with sweat
Toils to clothe the idle Khwaja with silken robes ;
The church fattens on his blood like the leach
And the State grows all-powerful through his exploited
strength ! "

One of his finest poems, which will long endure as a revolutionary song, is called " God's Command to the Angels." It is a command calling upon the angels to awaken and arouse the sleeping, dispossessed labourers and peasants of the world so that they may wrest their rights from the usurpers, whether of the Church or the State :

اٹھو میری دنیا کے غریبوں کو جگا دو
کاخ امرا کے در و دیوار ہلا دو
گرماؤ غلاموں کا لہو سوز یقیں سے
کنجشک فرومایہ کو شاہیں سے لڑا دو
سلطانی جمہور کا آقا ہے زمانہ
جو نقش کہن تم کو نظر آئے مٹا دو

جس کھیت سے دھقاں کو میسر نہیں روزی
 اس کھیت کے ہر خوشہٴ گندم کو جلا دو
 ”حق را بسجودے صنماں را بطوافے“
 بہتر ہے چراغِ حرم و دیر بتجھا دو
 میں ناخوش و بیزار ہوں مرمِ کی سلوں سے
 میرے لئے مٹی کا حرم اور بنا دو

Go and awaken the poor and the dispossessed of my
 Universe
 And shake the walls of the rich men's palaces to their
 foundations !
 Let the favour of self-confidence warm up the blood of the
 slaves,
 Let the frail sparrow hurt itself against the eagle !
 The day of the sovereignty of the masses approaches fast,
 Demolish the old relics wherever you find them.
 Is there a field which yields no livelihood to the peasant ?
 Go and burn to the ground every grain of wheat in it !
 "God is (often) sold away for a "*Sijda*", the idols for
 circumambulation."
 Better put out the lights of the mosques and the temples !
 I am disgusted with all these places of worship built in
 marble ;
 Go and build a lowly hut of clay for my worship !

Is there any other poet or writer who has expressed with greater depth and sincerity of feeling the pulsating soul of Socialism or his own courageous, uncompromising sympathy with those whom an unjust and inhuman social order has always kept under repression ? This is not lip sympathy ; this is not poetry which aggressively claims to be revolutionary—like a good deal of what modern progressive poets are writing—because it uses somewhat haphazardly and indiscriminately words like blood and fire

and flames and revolt. Its strength and appeal do not depend upon the use of certain violent, unrestrained and unconventional expressions and ideas. It is born out of the depths of the poet's heart and inspired by an irresistible surge of sympathy, fellow feeling and sense of justice. That is why the poet puts it in this particular form, *i.e.*, as a message of God to His angels to bestir themselves in this behalf. No one who has any understanding of Iqbal's conception of the relation of God to man will, I hope, indulge in the cheap criticism that this reference to God shifts the responsibility for the change and the revolution from man to his Maker for, according to Iqbal, the distinctive characteristic of man is that he alone, of all the creatures, can become an active participant in the creative activity of his Maker. This revolution is—according to Iqbal, as according to the most ardent radical—*man's* revolution ; *he* has to bring it about. In fact, while the dialectical materialist may deny to man an active and formative part in this change because he believes that larger historical forces are irresistibly and almost blindly tending towards this goal, Iqbal never fails to stress the creative rôle of man in this march of history and refuses to believe that “full-fledged events are lying, as it were, in the womb of reality and drop one by one like the grains of sand from the hour glass.”¹ Man must, he holds, play a decisive and directive part in

¹ *Lectures*, p. 48.

shaping the course of events.

There is one other difference between his view-point and that of the doctrinaire socialists, a difference in their respective sources of inspiration. The socialists are either moved by the inevitable pressure of historical forces or some of them "de-class" themselves by an intellectual *tour-de-force* and join the movement out of their sense of fairness or they feel that the rational planning of the world's economic life demands a fairer distribution of world's goods, Iqbal, however, remains steadfast to his spiritual ideal and the spiritual sources of his inspiration—belief in the dignity of man as man, respect for the human personality, rejection of all injustice and exploitation as repugnant to the "increasing purpose" of God for man, faith in a better social order as an instrument for the liberation of the human spirit and the realisation of its unexplored possibilities. This is what makes his reference to God significant; it does *not* shift the responsibility from man to God but invests that responsibility with an abiding and sacred significance.

But while expressing his sympathy in unambiguous terms with these progressive movements, he does not forego his intrinsic right of criticism when they go off the track or fall into the hands of selfish and narrow-minded groups which may use them for forging new fetters for mankind rather than for liberating it from old bonds. Democracy is good and we have seen

Iqbal refer hopefully to the "sovereignty of the masses" but when it fails to develop right leadership and becomes a repressive influence, arresting the growth of individuality and uniqueness, it is no better than a blind and mechanical counting of heads and political wisdom and justice are apt to become mere functions of a numerical majority :

اس راز کو اک مرد فرنگی نے کیا فاش
 ہر چند کہ دانا اُسے کہولا نہیں کرتے
 جمہوریت اک طرز حکومت ہے کہ حس میں
 بندوں کو گنا کرتے ہیں تو لا نہیں کرتے

A Western seer has exposed this secret even though wise men do not usually do so,
 Democracy is a form of Government in which men are merely counted and not weighed !

When Democracy or Socialism based on a purely materialistic conception of Universe come into conflict with the more fundamental laws of religion and the spirit of man, he challenges them with courage. As we have already seen, his position is that the unlimited power which Science has placed at the disposal of men should be controlled by *Vision* because, if power is divorced from the restraining influence of Religion which can transcend all racial and geographical differences, it is apt to become—as it has actually become to-day—a huge engine of destruction and suicidal rivalry. He has pointed out how the history of man has been dyed in blood because power has run amuck,

rejecting the guidance of religion :

تاریخِ امم کا یہ پیام ازلی ہے
صاحبِ نظراں! نشہٴ قوت ہے خطرناک
اس سیلِ سبک سیر و زمیں گیر کے آگے
عقل و نظر و علم و ہنر بھی خس و خاشاک
لا دین ہو تو ہے زہرِ ہلاہل سے بھی بڑھکر
ہو دین کی حفاظت میں تو ہر زہر کا تریاک

The history of nations teaches this lesson : If you are wise, beware of the intoxication of power, for it is a dangerous possession.

Before its blind, world-embracing rush and fury, Art and Science and reason are all like powerless dust.

Power, cut adrift from religion, is a deadly poison ; wedded to religion, it is an antidote for all poisons.

This sums up Iqbal's view of the age-long conflict between Science and Religion which has assumed a peculiarly acute form in our times. If anything were needed to demonstrate the truth and soundness of this position, the present crisis in the life of the world, of which the war is a violent symptom, provides a convincing proof of it, written in characters of blood and incredible destruction.

There is one other charge which certain short-sighted critics—including some progressives, not all—have brought forward against Iqbal's stand-point—namely, that he is a pessimist ! Not long ago, a Punjab professor, who is very fond of writing in the papers, made an attempt to analyse the causes for " the defeatist mentality of the Muslim community," and

came to the astounding conclusion that this was due to the defeatism and the pessimism of a group of writers amongst whom he prominently mentions Hali, Sharar and Iqbal. With his general view-point I am not concerned here ; in fact, it is too perverse and ill-informed to deserve any serious examination. Only an utter lack of critical understanding can make one believe that Sharar, who resuscitated in his novels the age of Muslim chivalry, is to be classed amongst the defeatists. It would be like accusing Scott of defeatism ! And it is only mental blindness which would describe the great Hali as a defeatist—Hali whose creative imagination reconstructed the saga of the Muslims' meteoric progress, whose uncompromising realism located, with unerring insight, the causes of their decay and who delivered to his people, in stirring words, a message of courage, hope and manly endeavour ! Such a charge against Iqbal is even more amazing and untrue, for there is no poet or thinker of this age who has given expression to a deeper and more sincere faith in the unlimited potentialities of men and his great future. Iqbal is essentially a prophet of optimism and power ; he has worked to infuse in the youth of this generation a spirit of enterprise and adventure, of struggle and victory, of the conquest of the tremendous forces that lie embedded in the bosom of nature. No theme has stirred him to a more powerful and effective expression than that of man's

potential greatness and its contrast with his actual weakness and pusillanimity :

ترے دریا میں طوفان کیوں نہیں ہے ؟
 خودی تیری مسلمان کیوں نہیں ہے ؟
 عبث ہے شکوۂ تقدیر یزداں !
 تو خود تقدیر یزداں کیوں نہیں ہے ؟

Why has thy river not the power of the storm ?

Why is thy self not truly Muslim yet ?

Vain is it to lament over the deeds of destiny !

Why dost thou not shape thy own Destiny ?

A discerning critic has defined pessimism as " the loss of will and energy to strive for ideals." If this definition is true—and I cannot think of a better one—Iqbal's position is the very negation of pessimism ; for, to him, life is perpetual striving in behalf of great and worthy ideals. In his writings, he has incessantly opposed the philosophy of life that teaches withdrawal or renunciation or defeatism. On this point he has joined issue vigorously with the pseudo-mystics who, according to him, are intellectually responsible for the decadence of the peoples of the East because, like Plato, they belittled action and placed undue emphasis on the isolated life of contemplation and thought. " A wrong concept misleads the understanding ; a wrong deed degrades the whole man, and may eventually demolish the structure of the human ego. The mere concept affects life only partially ; the deed is dynamically related to reality and issues from a generally constant attitude of the

whole man towards reality."¹ The end of the ego's quest, according to him, is "a more precise definition of individuality" which is only possible through a life of active striving and endeavour. This is how he sums up his position in his *Lectures*: "The final act is not an intellectual act, but a vital act which deepens the whole being of the ego and sharpens his will with the creative assurance that the world is not something to be merely seen or known through concepts, but something to be made and re-made by continuous action. It is a moment of supreme bliss and also a moment of the greatest trial for the ego."² In the *Javid-Nama* (p. 14) he gives expression to this idea in forceful words:

نره از كف سده تانے كه هست
 پخته، كير اند؛ نره تانے كه هست
 تاب خود را بر فزودن خوشتر است
 پيش خورشيد آزمودن خوشتر است
 پيكر فرسوده را ديكر تراش
 امتحان خويش كن 'موجود' باش
 ابي چنين 'موجود' 'مستحود' است و بس
 ورنه نار زندگي دود است و بس

Art thou a mere particle of dust ?
 Tighten the knot of thy ego ;
 And hold fast to thy tiny being !
 How glorious to burnish one's ego
 And to test its lustre in the presence of the Sun !

¹ *Lectures*, p. 174.

² *Ibid*, p. 187.

Re-chisel, then, thine ancient frame ;
And build up a new being.
Such being is real being ;
Or else thy ego is a mere ring of smoke !

V

Iqbal's genuine " progressiveness " is seen most vividly in the ideals which he places before the youth and the methods which he advocates for their attainment. The more " precise definition of individuality " to which I have just referred as " the end of the ego's quest " implies, on the one hand, the development of the limitless powers of activity and thought—for the fully cultivated individuality can conquer the Universe and even defy death—and, on the other, the subordination of this steeled and tempered individuality to the will and the purpose of God, which are, in reality, the purposes of man's own higher nature. For achieving this individuality man has to live a life of active striving, to develop the qualities of courage, tolerance and *Faqr* and to spurn comfort, ease, laziness and the appeal of inferior motives and purposes. One of the things to which he takes strong and recurring objection is the virtual bondage of one's individuality and self-respect for the sake of earning a miserable livelihood and the only too prevalent recourse to all kinds of flattery, meanness, cowardice and unjust competition in order to achieve this

petty end. His appeal to the Youth, in this connection, should challenge their conscience and search their hearts :

عصر حاضر ملک الموت ہے تیرا جس نے
قبض کی روح تری لے کے تجھے فکر معاش
دل لرزتا ہے حریفانہ کشاکش سے ترا
زندگی موت ہے کھو دیتی ہے جب ذوق خراش
اُس جنوں سے تجھے تعلیم نے بیگانہ کیا
جو یہ کہتا تھا خرد سے کہ بہانے نہ تراش
فیض فطرت نے تجھے دیدہ شاہیں بخشا
جس میں رکھدی ہے غلامی نے نگاہ خفاش

The present age is for you the angel of death ; it has given you the anxiety for livelihood but snatched away your soul ;

Your heart beats like a coward at the thought of struggle ; what is life but death when it loses the desire for combat ?

Education has made you a stranger to that fine frenzy which admonishes the intellect not to fabricate excuses for (cowardice) ;

Nature had gifted you with the eagle's soaring eye but slavery has put into it the miserable vision of a rat !

The significance of this attitude of manly courage, which he advocates and which defies the power of wealth and even the pangs of starvation can be fully appreciated only when we realise that this "crusading mentality" is an essential prerequisite for all great deeds in the world and that nothing progressive or radical has been achieved or can be achieved without inculcating it in the youth. The competing pull of the economic and what, for want of a better

word, I might call the "ideal" motives, which is the dominating factor in the life of all high-minded but poor and ambitious young men, is constantly exercising his mind. He does not, indeed, belittle the economic motive in life but is not willing to see youth compromise its generous idealism and its independence for its sake, because then there would be no force, no motive left to impel them to a life of struggle in the service of the great causes of art, science, social justice and humanity. He believes literally in the biblical maxim, "what will it avail a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul?" But he is careful to point out that most of us are risking our souls not for "the whole world" but for a crumb of stale bread :

خودی کے نگہباں کو ہے زہر ناب
وہ نار جس سے جاتی رہے اس کی آب
وہی نار ہے اس کے لئے ارجمند
رہے جس سے دنیا میں گردن بلند
وہی سجدہ ہے لائق اہتمام
کہ ہو جس سے ہر سجدہ تہجہ پر حرام

Poison is it for one's self-respect to crave for a livelihood that dims its lustre ;
No bread is worthy of him which does not permit him to hold his head high ;
No prostration is worth attempting except that which makes all other bowing down unnecessary.

Again :

جب عشق سکھاتا ہے آداب خود آگاہی
کہلتے ہیں غلاموں پر اسرار شہنشاہی

دارا و سکندر سے وہ مبدی فطرت اولیٰ
 ہو جس کی فطرتی میں ہوئے احمد نشانی
 اے طاہر لاهوتی اس رزق سے بہت اجسام
 جس رزق سے آئی ہو پیروز ساری کونامی
 آئین جوانمردانِ حق دولتی و بلبانی
 اللہ ہے شہروں کو آئی نہیں بزمی

When love reveals the laws of self-understanding, the
 secrets of power unfold themselves to the selves ;
 Superior to the Faqr to Darius and Alexander, whose *saqr*
 is emblazoned with the spirit of Ali, " the hand of God."
 Lord of the Unipyrcean ! death is preferable to the bread
 which arrests thy flight.
 The attributes of true manhood are truthfulness and cour-
 age, for the huns of Allah do not behave like the cowardly
 fox.

In his *Masnawj Secrets of the Self* he has discussed—while elucidating the "meanings of the names of Ali"—the dynamic relationship of a perfected individuality to its environment and given a stirring interpretation of the role of man in the Universe. Is *this* the teaching of a pessimist or a defeatist ?

از گل خود آدمی تعمیر کن
 آدمی را عالم تعمیر کن
 خیز و خلاق جهان تازه شو
 شعشہ در بر کن خلیل آوازہ شو
 با جهان نا مساعد ساختن
 هست در میدان سپر انداختن
 مرد خود دارے کہ باشد پشختہ کار
 با مزاج او بسازد روزگار

گر نسازد با مزاج او جہاں
می شود جنگ آزما با آسمان
اے ز آداب امانت بے خبر
از دو عالم خویشی را بہتر شمر

Build thy clay into a Man,
Build thy Man into a World !
Arise and create a new World !
Wrap thyself in flames, be an Abraham !
To comply with this world which does not favour thy
purposes
Is to fling away thy buckler on the field of battle.
The man of strong character who is master of himself
Will find Fortune complaisant.
If the world does not comply with his humour
He will try the hazard of war with Heaven ;
O thou that art heedless of the trust committed to thee,
Esteem thyself superior to both worlds !

I shall describe one more vision of man's life—
creative, renascent and free—as it flashed
across the poet's imagination. It is depicted
in the words of God addressed to Man :

زندہ مشتاق شو، خلاق شو
ہم چو ما گیرندہ آفاق شو
در شکن آں را کہ ناید سازگار
از ضمیر خود دگر عالم بیار
بندہ آزاد را آید گراں
زیستن اندر جہان دیگران
ہر کہ اورا قوت تخلیق نیست
پیشی ما جز کافرو زندیق نیست
از جمال ما نصیب خود نبرد
از تخیل زندگانی بر نخورد

مرد حق برون جویں شمعندہ باش
خود حیران خہ پیش را نقد، بر داس

Art thou alive? Be eager, be creative, be the conqueror
of the entire Universe, like Me;

Shatter into pieces what is unworthy of thee; fashion
a new world out of the depths of thy own being.

Tell me not that the free man to live in a world of others'
making.

He who lacks the power to create is to Me but a heretic
and an unbeliever;

He has not taken his share from the riches of My beauty;
he has not eaten of the tree of life.

Man of God, be sharp and bright like the flashing sword;
be the architect of the destiny of thy world!

This is Iqbal as I see him, as I have tried, imperfectly, to portray him; a standard-bearer in the cause of human freedom and decency and progress, anxious to awaken the dormant powers of man's higher nature and to use them against all those prejudices of colour, race and nationality which are responsible for the deprivations and exploitation to which individuals and groups are alike subject, crusading in behalf of a more just, more rational, more humane social order which should not be disfigured by the repressions and cruelties of the present day. In the earnest endeavour to contribute towards the creation of this social order, he is second to none and has, in fact, blazed a trail for the progressives who have come much later into the field. But there is one stage, as I have already pointed out, where he parts company with some of them—with those who find no place for spiritual values in their vision of the society of the

future. Iqbal is fundamentally opposed to that school of thought which finds the meaning of life entirely in its material manifestations and identifies progress with increase in production or its better distribution. From his point of view material advance is to be welcomed only in so far as it ministers to the life of the spirit—which comprehends art and literature, science and culture, philosophy and religion—in a word, the growth of man in intellect as well as vision. Any scheme of life which, in its preoccupation with material progress, leaves out these values sacrifices the kernel for the husk and lays up the seeds of an inevitable nemesis. But and this is where Iqbal's thought shows its characteristic balance and sense of reality—he is equally opposed to that life of withdrawal and renunciation which is content to find peace in isolated contemplation and leaves the world severely alone to wallow in its misery and desolation. For, unlike the pseudo-mystic, he is *not* concerned exclusively with man's "precious soul" but also with the life of man as lived in this material world here and now. He is anxious to make the individual a crusader both for this life and the life hereafter and regards this world as "the field where seed is actively sown for the life hereafter." There is a striking reference to this intimacy of relationship in *Bal-i-Jibril* in a conversation between the "Indian disciple" and "his spiritual preceptor,"

Rumi: The disciple, lamenting to the master, points out that he has voyaged extensively into the realms of the spirit and delved deeply into matters of religion but his worldly condition continues to be lowly and miserable. What is the reason of this curious anomaly ?

آسمانوں پر مرا فکر بلند
میں زمینی پر خوار و دردمند
کار دنیا میں رہا جاتا ہوں میں
ٹھوکریں اسراء میں کھاتا ہوں میں
کیوں میرے بس کا نہیں کار زمینی
اہلہ دنیا ہے کبوں دانائے دیں ؟

My thought soars up to the skies but I continue to be lowly and miserable on earth ;
I cannot make my way in the world and am constantly stumbling in my path ;
Why can I not manage my worldly affairs ; why is the spiritually wise a worldly fool ?

In the words of Rumi, Iqbal gives an emphatic and pungent reply to the Indian disciple which not only opens the eyes of that bewildered way-farer but should also enlighten his progressive critics who think that Iqbal's attitude is ascetic and other-worldly and that, in his pre-occupation with religion and the hereafter, he is apt to ignore the immediate and urgent affairs of this mundane world. This is Rumi's epigrammatic reply :

آں کہ بر افلاک رفتارش بود
بر زمینی رفتن چہ دشوارش بود

He who strides across the skies *cannot* find it difficult to walk on the earth.

What he means to convey emphatically through this cryptic utterance is that any individual or nation that claims to be spiritually great must, of necessity, make a success of its socio-political life—otherwise its claim to spirituality is a hypocritical farce. This lesson must specially be taken to heart by the nations of the East which, for the last two hundred years, have been priding themselves on their “spirituality,” while they have progressively declined in their power, prestige and the proper organisation of their social life and institutions. Their claims to superiority over the Western nations on the basis of this fancied, rootless spirituality are as untenable as the counter claims of the Western nations, which have been mainly preoccupied with the increase of power which they have devoted to destructive purposes. Iqbal believes that real and abiding salvation is unattainable through a life of asceticism and *tapassaya*. It is here and now that men and women must learn to live justly, decently and sincerely ; it is here that they must ceaselessly cultivate their manifold inner powers and try to control the tremendous forces of Nature ; it is here that they must learn to utilise them, not for domination but for service, not for repression and destruction but for creation and enrichment ; it is here that, by devotion to the highest ideals, they can become co-partners in God’s

حرف بدرا بر لب آوردن خطاست
 کافر و مومن ہمہ خلق خداست
 بندہ حق از خدا گیرد طریق
 می شود بر کافر و مومن شفیق
 کفر و دین را گیر در پہنائے دل
 دل اگر بگریزد از دل وائے دل
 گرچہ دل زندانی آب و گل است
 ایی ہمہ آفاق آفاق دل است !

What is humanity ? respect for man !
 Learn then the true status of man ;
 Sin is it to utter a single harsh word
 For the believer and the unbeliever are alike children
 of God ;
 The man of God learns his ways from God Himself,
 He is gracious alike to the believer and the unbeliever ;
 Take belief and unbelief into the compass of the heart,
 If the heart runs away from the heart, woe betide the heart !
 The heart is, no doubt, shut in the prison-house of clay
 But the whole of this Universe is the empire of the heart !

And the following verses give a revealing glimpse into the lovable, broad-minded and far-sighted nature of Iqbal himself :

کریں گے اہل نظر تازہ بستیاں آباد -
 مری نگاہ نہیں سوٹے کوفہ و بغداد
 نہ فلسفی سے نہ ملا سے ہم غرض مجھکو
 یہ دل کی موت ! وہ اندیشہ و نظر کا فساد
 فقیہ شہر کی تحقیر کیا مجال مری
 مگر یہ بات کہ میں ڈھونڈتا ہوں دل کی کشاد
 خرید سکتے ہیں دنیا میں عشرت پرویز
 خدا کی دین ہے سرمایہ غم فرہاد

IQBAL'S CONCEPTION OF GOD

IQBAL is a philosopher and a poet. It is not easy to decide whether he is a poet-philosopher or a philosopher-poet. We have more poetical writings of his than purely philosophical ones, and while much of his poetry is highly finished, of his philosophical works, which are only two, one¹ is mainly historical and the other² is scholastic in conception and, though exhibiting complete unity of thought, lacks unity of treatment. These facts might lead one to think that he is first poet and then a philosopher.

But this may not be a correct estimate of him. In him philosophy and poetry seem to be so indissolubly blended as they have never been before in any great thinker—not even in Dante. His poetry and philosophy both are great. Perhaps his poetry is so because of his philosophy and his philosophy is so because of his poetry. In the development of his mind neither element has lagged behind. Throughout there has been a balance or rather a blend of both.

This article, however, has nothing to do

¹ *Development of Metaphysics in Persia.*

² *Six Lectures*, 1930 : Revised edition under the title, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, O.U.P., 1934.

with Iqbal's poetry. Its scope is definitely confined to his philosophy, and in this also only to his conception of God. Iqbal's philosophy and his idea of God equally, pass through three periods. From the nature of the case it is impossible to draw a clear line between these periods. Nevertheless each period, taken as a whole, bears a few features by which it is definitely distinguishable from the remaining two.

In the first period which extends from 1901 to about 1908, Iqbal conceives of God as Eternal Beauty, existing in independence of and prior to particulars and yet being revealed in them all. He reveals Himself in the heavens above and the earth below, in the sun and the moon, in the rise of the stars and the fall of dew, in land and sea, in fire and flame, in stones and trees, in birds and beasts, in scents and songs ; but nowhere does He reveal Himself more than in the eyes of Saleema, even as for Dante, He is revealed nowhere more than in the eyes of Beatrice. Just as iron filings are attracted by a magnet, so also are all things attracted by God. Thus God as Eternal Beauty brings into existence all movement of things. Force in physical objects, growth in plants, instinct in beasts and will in man, are mere forms of this attraction, this love for God. Eternal Beauty is, therefore, the source, the essence and the ideal of everything. God is universal and all-inclusive like

an ocean, and the individual is like a drop. Again, God is like the sun and the individual is like a candle and candle ceases to burn in the presence of the sun. Like a bubble, or a spark, life is transitory—nay, the whole of existence is transitory.¹

This in brief is Iqbal's conception of God in the first period of his thought. It does not seem difficult to trace its source. It is fundamentally Platonic. For Plato also regards God as Eternal Beauty, as a universal nature which is prior to particulars and is manifested in them all as form. He also regards Him as an ideal to which we are all moving and he also divorces love from sex implications, giving it a universal import. This Platonic conception, as interpreted by Plotinus, adopted by the early Muslim Scholastics and adapted to pantheism by the pantheistic mystics, came down to Iqbal as a long tradition in Persian and Urdu poetry and was supplemented by his study of the English romantic poets.

In his first idea of God, therefore, he cannot be considered to have been very original. He is simply conveying to us in beautiful notes what he has received as a heritage of history. Nevertheless he uses this idea of Godhead as a material for his poems in a hundred and one novel ways. In 1908 he has already been recognised as one of the foremost poets of

¹ *Bang-i-Dara* (The Caravan Bell), pp. 73, 84, 107, 117, 118, 122, 127, 128 and 191.

India and his creative genius has already given the world some immortal verse.

The second period of Iqbal's mental development may be dated from about 1908 to 1920. The key to the understanding of this period is Iqbal's change of attitude towards the distinction he draws between beauty as revealed in things on the one hand, and the love of beauty of the other. To begin with, as we have noted, he regards beauty as eternal and as the efficient and final cause of all love, all desire and all movement. But in the second period there is a change in this position. First a doubt and then a kind of pessimism has crept into his mind about the eternity of beauty and its efficient and final causality. "Jalwa-i-Husn", "Haqiqat-i-Husn", "Shabnam-aur-Satare" and the second part of the first verse of "Satara", give expression to this attitude. Side by side there is now a growing conviction of the eternity of love, desire, pursuit or movement.

From 1905 to 1908 Iqbal studies under McTaggart and James Ward at Cambridge. During the same period he makes a deep study of Rumi¹ in connexion with his thesis. The influence of McTaggart and James Ward on Iqbal fails to make itself felt till after his return from England. While he is there, he remains a pantheistic mystic. This is corroborated by

¹ Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, the well-known Iranian Philosophical poet of the thirteenth century. His chief work, the *Masnawi*, is translated into English by Professor R. A. Nicholson.

McTaggart in his letter to Iqbal on the publication of Nicholson's English translation of his "Secrets of the Self." "Have you not changed your position very much"? inquires McTaggart and adds: "Surely, in the days when we used to talk philosophy together, you were much more a pantheist and mystic." The fact that this remark of McTaggart's has been quoted by Iqbal himself in one of his articles¹ without any challenge, proves that he regards it as true of his position. In about 1908, however, Iqbal begins to appreciate McTaggart's conception of personal immortality. He also begins to see an identity between the theistic pluralism of Ward and the metaphysical position of Rumi and soon becomes a theistic pluralist himself. A little later Rumi is adopted by him as his spiritual leader.

It seems, however, that Rumi is adopted by Iqbal as a spiritual leader not only because he is an akin spirit, speaking the same tongue and sharing with him a mystic philosophy, a poetic genius, an intense religious temper, a firm belief in God and a deep love of the Arabian Prophet. These merits could perhaps be found also in others. Iqbal takes Rumi as his life-long guide also because, and perhaps chiefly because, Rumi anticipates some of the fundamental ideas of his two new finds—Nietzsche and Bergson.

¹ Iqbal, *McTaggart's Philosophy in the Journal of East India Society*; reprinted in the *Truth*, Lahore, July 1937.

Though Iqbal has a working knowledge of German and can read German authors in the original, the translation of Nietzsche's entire works into English between 1907 and 1911, make these works even more accessible to him. Between 1910 and 1915, Bergson's books are translated into English by Wildon Carr, Slosson, Hulme, Mitchell, Pogson, Paul and Palmer; and Iqbal, who does not know French, has an access to these also.

Now he discovers that besides Rumi's affinity with Ward, there is also affinity between him on the one side and Nietzsche and Bergson on the other. Rumi, like Nietzsche, believes in evolution, in the freedom, possibilities and eternity of the self, in the will to power, in the value of super-egos, and in destruction of the old for the construction of the new. And like Bergson he believes in movement as the essence of reality, and in intuition as the source of knowledge. This vitalistic position is reinforced in Iqbal's mind by the influence of Macdougall's *Social Psychology* and *Outlines of Psychology* published in 1908 and 1910, respectively. In these works life is identified with Bergson's *elan vital* and the sentiment of self-regard is regarded as the core of human personality. All these ideas form the key-notes of Iqbal's Philosophy in the second period.

Thus under the leadership of an old Oriental philosopher and with the aid of several modern

European thinkers, Iqbal begins to develop his philosophy which, in view of its most prominent feature during this second period of his thought, may be called the philosophy of the self.

It is in the light of this philosophy that one must understand Iqbal's ever-increasing emphasis on the efficiency and eternity of will and his ever-decreasing belief in the efficiency and eternity of beauty—a change in his attitude which takes him far away from Platonism and pantheistic mysticism.

Iqbal formulates his new philosophy in the later poems of *Bang-i-Dara*, in *Asrar-i-Khudi* and in *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*. His thought is now guided by the concept of the self which is regarded as a dynamic centre of desires, pursuits, aspirations, efforts, resolves, power and action. The self does not exist in time, but time is dynamism of the self. It is action and, like a sword, carves its way through all difficulties, obstacles or hindrances. Time as action is life, and life is self; therefore time, life, and self are all three compared to a sword.

The so-called external world with all its sensuous wealth including serial time and space, and the so-called world of feelings, ideas and ideals are both creations of the self. Following Fichte and Ward, Iqbal tells us that the self posits from itself the not-self for its own perfection. The sensible world is the self's own creation. All the beauties of Nature are, therefore, the creatures of our own wills. Desires

create them ; not they desires.

God, the ultimate reality, is the Absolute Self, the Supreme Ego. He is no longer to be conceived as Eternal Beauty—as block reality. Plato and poets like Hafiz who hold such a view are all to be condemned. God is now regarded as Eternal Will, and beauty is reduced to the position of an attribute of His, an attribute which covers now both the aesthetic value and the moral value. Instead of God's beauty His unity is now emphasised. Belief in unity is shown to have high pragmatic value, for it gives unity of purpose and strength to individuals, nations and mankind as a whole ; enhances power, creates ever-increasing desires, hopes and aspirations, and removes all cowardice and all fear of the other-than-God.

God reflects Himself not in the sensible world, but in the finite selves and, for that reason, approach to Him is possible only through the self. Search after God is, therefore, conditioned upon a search after one's self. Again, God is not to be sought by begging, and beseeching for that shows weakness and helplessness. Nearness to God must be consistent with the dignity of the self. Man should seek Him by the strength of his own will. He should rather capture Him much the same way as a hunter captures his game. But God is anxious Himself to be captured, being as much in search of man as man is in search of Him. Having found God, one is not to allow oneself to be

absorbed in Him and be, thus, annihilated. On the other hand one should absorb God within oneself—absorb as much of His attributes as one possibly can, and there is no limit to this possibility. By absorbing God within itself the ego grows. When it grows into a super-ego, it rises to the rank of the viceregency of God.

Such in brief is Iqbal's conception of God at this second period of his thought.

The third period of Iqbal's mental development extends from about 1920 to the date of his death. If the second period be regarded as a period of growth, this should be taken as a period of maturity. Iqbal has already accepted the influences which his genius has allowed him to accept. He has collected the elements of his synthesis and now elaborates them into an all-round system. This he does in eight works which are brought out in rapid succession between 1923 and 1938. His philosophy in this period may be aptly described as the philosophy of change. The idea of Reality as self is still prominent but that of change is more so.

Since the scope of this address is confined to Iqbal's Conception of God, all other aspects of his system are ignored and a brief account is now given of his views about God in their final form.

God is "Reality as a whole" and Reality as a whole is essentially spiritual—spiritual in

the sense of being an individual and an ego. He is to be regarded as an ego, because, like the human self, He is "an organising principle of unity, a synthesis which holds together and focalises the dispensing dispositions of His living organism for a constructive purpose." He is an ego also because He responds to our reflection and our prayer; for "the real test of a self is whether it responds to the call of another self."¹ Strictly speaking, He is not an ego, but the Absolute Ego. He is Absolute because He is all-inclusive and there is nothing outside Him.

The Absolute Ego is not static like the universe as conceived by Aristotle. He is a creative spirit, a dynamic will or living energy and, since there is nothing beside Him to put a limit to Him, He is an absolutely free creative spirit. He is also infinite. But He is not infinite in the special sense, for special infinities are not absolute. His infinity is intensive, not extensive, and consists in the infinite inner possibilities of His creative activity. His being a free living energy with infinite creative possibilities means that He is Omnipotent.

The Ultimate Ego is then an omnipotent energy, a free becoming, a creative movement. It may be said that to think of movement which is not the movement of some objects is impossible. To this Iqbal's answer is that

¹ Iqbal, *McTaggart's Philosophy in the Journal of East India Society*; reprinted in the *Truth*, Lahore, July, 1937.

things can be derived from movement, but movement cannot be derived from immobile things, that movement is original, static things are derivative and that they become static because they are derived from movement by finite thought working with static concepts. And he finds enough support for his view in modern physics which reduces all physical things to mere centres of energy.

If then the Ultimate Ego is an all-inclusive movement, is He not constantly changing? No and yes. No, because, according to Iqbal, change cannot be predicted of Him in the sense in which it is predicted of us, as a serial change—a succession from situation to situation, determined by our pursuits within the limitations of our nature surrounded by obstructing environment. Yes, because change is an attribute of His in another sense.

In our case serial change implies want, limitation, imperfection. The Absolute Ego is the whole of Reality. He is not surrounded by an alien universe. Therefore, change as a movement from one imperfect state to a relatively more perfect state, or *vice versa*, is inapplicable to Him. The conception of serial time does not apply to Him. He is a continuous creation and, therefore, changes only in the sense in which a continuous creation or continuous flow of energy can be said to change. But change as continuous creation does not imply imperfection. We should not repeat the

mistake of Aristotle and Ibn Hazm¹ and conceive perfection as a final stage of completion. Such a stage must be characterised by inaction. To think of Ultimate Ego as perfect in this sense is to make Him "an utterly inactive, motiveless and stagnant neutrality—an absolute nothing." A perfect individuality means to Iqbal, as to Bergson, an organic whole of which no detached part can live separately. The Ultimate Ego is perfect in this sense but not only in this sense. His perfection also implies "the infinite scope of His creative vision." His "not-yet," therefore, means the infinite creative possibilities of His being. He is perfect then as an unfailing being which retains its all-inclusive wholeness throughout and the vision of which has infinite creative possibilities.

From the perfection of the Absolute Ego's individuality it follows that there is no reproduction in Him, for reproduction is building up a new organism—a duplication—out of a detached fragment of the old. He, as a perfect Ego, as absolutely unique, cannot be conceived as procreating His own equals and "harbouring His rivals at home." He, therefore, has no progeny.

If God or the Absolute Ego or the whole of Reality is a freely, infinitely and perfectly creative, all-powerful movement, are we to say, with Browning, that He is also all-good or, with Schopenhauer, that He is all evil? "The

¹ A Spanish Muslim philosopher of the eleventh century.

issue," says Iqbal, "cannot be finally decided at the present stage of our knowledge of the Universe." The fact of moral and physical evil stands out prominent in the life of nature. But evil arises from the conflict of opposing individuals and is, therefore, relative to finite beings. Again, "good and evil, though opposite, must fall under the same whole." "But here," we are told, "we pass the boundaries of pure thought and can see our way only by faith in the eventual triumph of goodness."

The Absolute Ego is also omniscient, but His knowledge is not, like the knowledge of a finite being, discursive—always moving round a veritable "other." Since there is no "other" for Him, His knowledge cannot be considered as having the same perspective as human knowledge.

Nor is it right to think with Jalal-ud-Din Dawwani,¹ Iraqi² and Royce that the knowledge of the Absolute Ego is a single indivisible act of perception, grasping the entire sweep of history, regarded as a sequence of events. This would be attributing to Him a kind of passive omniscience—a mere awareness of an already finished structure. His knowledge is not like a mirror-reflection of His all-inclusive being.

¹ A Muslim thinker of sixteenth century; author of the celebrated work *Akhlaq-i-Jalali*.

² Fakhr-ud-Din Ibrahim of Hamadan, better known by his poetical *nom-de-guerre* of Iraqi, a poet, mystic and philosopher of the thirteenth century, pupil of Muhiyyud-Din Ibn-ul-Arabi and author of *Lam'at* (Flashes).

If it be regarded as a mirror-reflection of a preordained order of events, then no scope is left for initiative, novelty and free creativeness. We must, therefore, conceive His knowledge as perfectly self-conscious, living creative activity—an activity in which knowing and creating are one. Unfortunately we possess no words to express the kind of knowledge which is also at the same time creative of its own object. His activity is at once the knowing and the creating of the object of knowledge.

Bergson is wrong in taking Reality as a mere free creative vitality of the nature of will, in regarding it as split into plurality of things by thought, and thus in creating a dualism of thought and will. He is right in holding that intellect is a specialising activity of the finite self. But it is not only that. Thought is also a feature of the life of the Ultimate Ego. He is not pure will. He is a *conscious* organic growth—a *consciously* free becoming, a creative movement in which thought and being are really one. His thought and being are one, the future itself is nothing but the open possibilities of creation.

This discussion leads us to the question of the relation of time with the Ultimate Ego. He is Eternal but, as has been said before, not so in the sense in which a thing is supposed to last in all times. This implies a wrong view of time. It makes time external to Him.

He is constant movement, constant change and change is, indeed, unthinkable without time. But His time is not a serial time to which the distinctions of past, present and future are essential ; it is change without succession. If we were to imagine time as applied to Him as a line, then it is not a line already drawn for Him to move on. It must be imagined as a line-in-the-drawing no part of which can be thought of as untraversed future. But it is wrong to imagine the time of the Ultimate Ego in special terms. It is pure duration. But what is pure duration ? The nature of pure duration is "revealed by a deeper analysis of our own conscious experience." Ordinarily we take our experiences to be in serial time. But "it is in the moments of profound meditation that we sink into our deeper self and reach the inner centre of experience. In the life-process of this deeper ego the states of consciousness melt into each other. The unity of this ego is like the unity of the germ in which the experience of its individual ancestors exist, not as a plurality but as a unity in which every experience permeates the whole. There is no numerical distinctness of states in the totality of the inner ego. "There is change and movement but this change and movement are indivisible. Their elements interpenetrate and are wholly non-serial in character." Pure time of our own true self then is not a string of separate instants. It is time regarded as prior to the

disclosure of its possibilities.

“ It is time as felt, not as thought and calculated. ” It is not something outside in which the ego moves ; it is “ its inward reach, its realisable possibilities which live within the depths of its nature, ” and are being actualised in a free creative movement. It is intensive time, not extensive. It is not prior to self, as Bergson wrongly thinks. Neither pure time nor pure space can hold together multiplicity. It is the act of the self which can seize it in an organic wholeness of synthesis. “ To be in pure duration is identical with being a self. ”

The time of the Ultimate Ego, on our own analogy, is also pure in the above sense. It is His creative movement, regarded inwardly as the infinite inherent possibilities of His nature, unfolding themselves in ever-new creations. He is pure duration in which thought, activity and purpose interpenetrate to form a unity—a unity in which the past is rolled into the present and future exists in the form of open possibilities.

According to Iqbal, Bergson rightly holds that experience is the past moving along and rolling into the present, but he is wrong in denying the teleological character to reality on the ground that “ the portals of the future must remain wide open to Reality. ” Bergson's objection, says Iqbal, is sound if by teleology be meant the working out of a pre-ordained end.

Such a view, however, would make the

temporal order of things a mere reproduction or an imitation of an already determined and completed eternal mould. It would make pure time inapplicable to Reality. The Ultimate Ego is devoid of purpose, if by purpose is meant a foreseen end—a far off fixed pre-determined destination to which He is moving.

The Ultimate Ego is purposive, but not in the above sense. He is purposive in the sense in which our own consciousness is purposive. Our unity of consciousness does not only fold within itself the past but has a forward movement also. It has reference to a purpose, and purpose cannot be conceived without reference to the future. Purpose is really nothing but a forward movement in consciousness.

Remembering and anticipating both operate in our present state of consciousness. On the analogy of our own consciousness, the Ultimate Ego is through and through purposive in the sense that in bringing Himself to each fulfilment by preserving and supplementing the past, He has a forward movement. It further means that He is not a mere vital impulse but is selective and is capable of ideas as living parts of His organism, rich with the wealth of possibilities the very thinking and selecting of the details of which would mean their creation. Thus He holds up as a present reality not only the entire past within His unity throughout His

movement but also the entire possibilities of His not-yet-determined creative knowledge or conscious creation.

This is a brief account of Iqbal's conception of God in its final stage. His studies in Western Philosophy for his M.A. degree in India and his research work in Muslim Philosophy in England and Germany, prepared the ground for Iqbal's philosophy in general and the problem of Divine reality in particular; and his early religious training supplied the seed, out of which has grown a beautiful plant of the root of which I have given a rather dry and colourless account. Owing to the inner possibilities of the seed itself, the richness of the soil, the suitability of the climate or temper of the then current thought, the plant began to grow vigorously. But it was trained to take its present shape by the philosophies of Rumi, McTaggart, James Ward, Bergson and Nietzsche. Whatever the influence of others in other directions, with regard to the solution of the problem in hand, Iqbal's thought was moulded chiefly by Ward.

Nietzsche's philosophy is Godless. His obsession with the idea of superman, makes his ideas of society and reality sink into insignificance. Bergson's "creative impulse" is very much like Schopenhauer's unconscious purpose. The ultimate reality for Iqbal, on the other hand, is God as conscious and personal. McTaggart finds the destiny and goal of the self

in eternity¹ and not in serial time, but he is an atheist.²

Rumi has so much in common with Iqbal, yet much of his thought can be interpreted in pantheistic terms. The case of Ward is, however, different. His influence on Iqbal is greater. To measure this influence one has only to see the common elements in their respective views about the problem in hand.

Both of them, after the manner of Kant, reject the three notorious arguments for the existence of God, discard Platonism, Pantheism and Absolutism and object to regarding omniscience as fore-knowledge of a pre-ordained reality and applying serial time to God and the finite self—and all this for exactly the same reasons. Both are Pluralist Theists and Spiritual Monists. Both hold Panpsychism against Berkley's occasionalism and windowed monadism, against Leibnitz's windowless monadism. Both believe in the creative freedom and immortality of the individual. For both the sensuous world is due to interaction between egos, the body is created by the mind to serve its own purposes and serial time is only an act of the mind. Both hold on exactly the same grounds and in exactly the same sense that God is an infinite, conscious, omnipotent and omniscient spirit which is immanent in the finite egos and yet transcends them in the same way

¹ Cf. McTaggart, *The Nature of Existence*.

² Cf. McTaggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion*.

as every organism is immanent in its parts and yet transcends these parts.

For both He is a perfectly free creative spirit that limits its own freedom by creating free finite egos, and for both, this internal limitation is not inconsistent with His own perfect freedom. According to both, God is perfect throughout His creative progress, for this progress is progress *in* perfection, not *towards* perfection. Both hold that God's will functions through the will of the finite egos. Both believe with Wundt that reason can prove the necessity of faith, but it cannot turn faith into knowledge. Both agree that belief in God is ultimately a matter of faith, though of a rational faith, that conviction or complete certitude about Him comes not from reason but from living, that direct communion with Him is gained only through rapport or love and that is only through love for Him that Immortality is achieved by the finite self.¹

From all this Iqbal's indebtedness to Ward is obvious. Perhaps with full justice one can regard him as Ward's disciple, but it will be a mistake to think that Iqbal does not go beyond Ward's conception of God. He certainly does, and that also in a very important respect. Ward regards God as eternal, but fails to explain eternity, chiefly because he has no idea of time as non-serial.

¹ Cf. James Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, and *The Realm of Ends*.

Iqbal, getting his cue from a saying of the Prophet of Islam in which time is identified with God, accepts Bergson's theory of pure duration with some modifications and thereby not only succeeds in explaining Divine eternity but also in laying greater emphasis on the Dynamic aspect of reality. Again Iqbal's idea of perfection is not the same as that of Ward. It is partly Bergsonian and partly his own.

When we compare the methods of Ward, Bergson and Iqbal we find that like the Neo-Idealists of Italy, all three of them start from the individual's experience. There seems to be nothing wrong with this procedure. Since we are certain before all other things of our own experience, it is much the best procedure, though, as Iqbal himself thinks, not the only right procedure to make this experience the starting point in our search for the Ultimate. Nevertheless, there is one great danger in this our best method of study. This danger lies in the pitfall of viewing everything anthropomorphically and to me it seems that both Ward and Iqbal have fallen into this pitfall. It is true that we cannot interpret the sensible world save in terms of our own experience. Even the electron as a unit of energy cannot be conceived save on the analogy of our own sense of effort. It is perhaps equally true that we cannot conceive God except in terms of our ideals.

Nor can we say that this interpretation of

things in terms of our experience of facts and ideals, is essentially false, without belying our emotional and volitional demands and without falling into extreme passivism. We, therefore, seem to be justified in regarding our anthropomorphic conception of God as being in harmony with, or as a limited vision of, reality as a whole. We are perhaps also justified in thinking that this partial vision is capable of further development. Nevertheless, it seems to me clear that what reality is as a whole, must for ever remain hidden from the finite self, for how can the part with all its limitations comprehend the whole which essentially goes far beyond its compass?

RUMI, NIETZSCHE AND IQBAL

THE writings of most great poets and thinkers yield, on analysis, no more than one or two foundational conceptions. Every great man, be he a reformer or a thinker, has a special philosophy of life from which spring all his speeches and utterances, however multitudinous they might be in their modes of expression or exposition. His whole towering superstructure of thought is raised on the bed-rock of that philosophy. The flowers and fruits and leaves and branches of the tree of his wisdom, despite their variety and volume, proceed from the same single root. Until one gets at that root-principle, it is not possible fully to appreciate or understand the writings of any great thinker. A great book or a great philosophy is at times like a combination lock which will not open until we know the key-letters of that lock. Of course, this is true only of those thinkers whose thought has weight and inner harmony, and whose entire being is in the grip of some basic conception of life. The whole thought and even activity of such persons is determined by that conception. Mir Anis, in a moment of poetical exultation, says about himself :

اک رنگ کا مضمون ہو تو سو ڈھنگ سے باندھوں

But in fact it may be said of every great poet or thinker that he expresses the same idea in a hundred ways. The same is the case with most religious books. The teachings of any religion, when weighed and sifted, are found to be based on a view of life, peculiar to that religion, which can at times be expressed in a couple of words or two brief sentences.

We have now to inquire whether Iqbal too has any such foundational idea which could serve as a key to the interpretation of his poetry. In neither Urdu nor Persian is there a poet who could compare with Iqbal in variety of thought and wealth of imagery. Modern philosophy and ancient philosophy, mysticism, Islamic and non-Islamic, of all types, the concepts of the different religions of the world, social, political and ethical theories and all ancient and modern movements in thought and activity—Iqbal is at home with all these, dips them in the vats of his own poetic genius and presents them to us in a moving form. There is a common belief that poets and exponents of other fine arts ought not to become bound to any one idea or doctrine, that if a poet puts himself in the prison-house of any single doctrine or conception, that flight of his fancy will be but the flight of a bird in a cage, and if he begins to propagate any one idea, he will no longer remain a poet. He will become a preacher and his art will degenerate into propaganda. For this reason, literary critics

generally consider it wrong on principle to try to look for a teaching or philosophy of life or any kind of message in a poet's writings. The picture depicted in the Holy Qur'an of a poet too has reference to the same conception of the function of poetry. The Holy Prophet's opponents called him at times a mad man, at times a poet. The Holy Qur'an repudiates both the charges. According to the Holy Qur'an, it is wrong to call a prophet mad, because the words and actions of a mad man lack continuity and harmony, whereas in the words and deeds of a prophet there is complete inner and outer harmony. It is wrong to call him a poet because a poet generally does not necessarily act on what he says in his poetry, and what he says lacks harmony. What he says at one time may be wholly different from what he might say in other conditions. When he rejoices in a happy mood of spring, he speaks of it as if life were but one unending spring, all happiness and all bliss, and every particle of the universe in raptures ! He paints everything in the colours of his own mood which is but temporary and evanescent. Similarly, when he describes autumn, he casts a pall of sadness over the whole universe. Everything then appears to him in the grip of death. Life then becomes to him a house of mourning, as being in fact no more than sorrows and tribulations.

The valleys of life are numberless, and the

poet, in his imagination and impressions, is a purposeless wanderer, having neither home nor destination. In the words of the Holy Qur'an : " They wander bewildered in every valley " (XXVI, 225). Therefore a poet, as poet, cannot be a guide, and those who take him for their guide in the battle-field of life will certainly go astray. When a poet's thought is without purpose or direction, it is obvious that his activity too must be without purposeful direction. Some of Iqbal's contemporary poets, who are considered masters in their own art, did not consider him to be a poet in the true sense of that term. They contend that he turned his poetry into an instrument for teaching and propaganda which did great harm to his position as a poet. On the other hand, they regard their own freedom and absence of restraint as the very essence of poetry. In view of such criticisms Iqbal himself used to say that he was not a poet and those who expected poetical ecstasies of him did not understand his purpose. It was not the object of his art to please or soothe or entertain his readers with pretty conceits.

If absence of restraint and purposeless wandering in thought and imagination were the essentials of poetry, we would obviously have to declare of some of the greatest poets that they were no poets at all in the sense of the word. But the truth is what a poet himself has said of such poets :

مشو منکر کہ در اشعار ایی قوم
ورائے شاعری چیزے دگر هست

Do not deny (the worth of these poets) because in the verses of these people there is something more than poetry.

From this true picture, which it has painted of generality of poets, the Holy Qur'an excepts those who combine poetry with faith and purity of conduct; for faith and righteous endeavour can surely keep a poet from extravagance of thought and expression. Who can deny that Iqbal has a very firm faith in certain truths that govern life? He can and does wander occasionally in many valleys, but there is one straight path to which he invariably comes back from all his excursions. There is this thing common between the *Masnavi* of Maulana Rum and the poetry of Iqbal that both set out on frequent pleasure trips in various directions but invariably find a way back to their own real path. It is poetry of this kind that has been called a part of prophethood and it is a poet of this type who is said to be divinely inspired. "He is not a prophet but has a Book" (نیست پیغمبر ولی دارد کتاب) has been said of Maulana Rum, and Garami in a well-known line has said of Iqbal that he did the work of a prophet, though one may not call him a prophet (پیغمبری کردد پیغمبر نتوان گفت).

It must be apparent to those acquainted with Iqbal's works that, despite his wealth of thought and imagery, certain tendencies and

preferences are obvious in his poetry. *Khudi* (realization of the Self) is his favourite theme. The word had an evil odour in Islamic literature. By his power of song Iqbal turned it into one of good repute. By deepening and broadening and ennobling the conception of *Khudi*, Iqbal completely changed its significance and implications. To bring about such a revolution in conceptions which had been current for centuries is not the work of ordinary mortals. In the same way he re-evaluated the traditional conceptions of *Momin* (believer), *Taqdir* (predestination), God, man and Islam which had been in currency for many decades.

By natural aptitude and similarity of views on life Iqbal has been unusually influenced by two thinkers from among his forerunners. From among the ancients of the East he acknowledged Rumi as his master and guide, while modern Europe presented him with Nietzsche's philosophy of the Self and his idea of the Superman, which he regarded with approval. From a cursory glance it would appear as if in the best portions of his poetry Iqbal borrowed either from Rumi or from Nietzsche, while some superficial critics have even declared that he was no more than an echo of these two thinkers. There is no doubt that to Iqbal Rumi's faith and Nietzsche's unbelief are but two views of the same picture :

(Belief and disbelief both are striving in Thy path, confessing that He is One, without

an associate).

There is also no doubt that Iqbal has benefited from both. The Maulana's *Masnavi* and his *Diwan* are a fathomless ocean, and it is no easy matter to discover the thread of unity in the variety and volume of his thought. But he has some distinctive characteristics which caught Iqbal's eye. To determine how far Iqbal is indebted to his master and what he has learnt from him it is necessary first of all to define Rumi's mysticism and know its background. We shall then be in a position to know how far Iqbal has followed his master, how far he has travelled shoulder to shoulder with him, and whether there are any problems in which Iqbal, impelled by the conditions of the modern age, has surpassed his master. The same procedure will be adopted later in discussing Iqbal's relation to Nietzsche.

Rumi's Mysticism

What is called mysticism is to be met with more or less in all great religions. Like all basic conceptions about life its definition is also extremely difficult. In Islamic mystic literature alone we come across hundreds of definitions, and some definitions are so opposed to one another that it seems well-nigh impossible to discover anything common between them. However, the following elements are met with in most mystic systems:

1. Reality is one.

The Islamic notions of mysticism are very ancient. Among Greek philosophers Plato has expounded them at great length. Later on Aphrodite, Alexander and Jalal-ud-Din Rumi raised on these bases a towering structure of metaphysical philosophy. In Islamic and Christian mystic literature the ideas and conceptions of Plato and Aphrodites have got so mixed up with the purely Islamic and Christian concep-

tions that it has become impossible now to separate the ones from the others. These conceptions made their entry into the Islamic world at first in company with philosophy. Later, mystics employed them for a rational exposition of their own experiences. Similar elements are also to be found in the Buddhist idea of Nirvana and the Vedantic doctrine of pantheism, which has led some orientalists to think that mysticism entered Islam from Buddhism and Vedanta philosophy. But history offers no conclusive proof of it.

By the time of Jalal-ud-Din Rumi these conceptions had become current throughout the Islamic world. Besides philosophy and poetry, they had even gained admission into the sanctum of theology, and all fundamental problems of theology and metaphysics had been under discussion. It is evident from Rumi's *Masnavi* that the author has an immense wealth of thought before him. He is neither a jurist nor a philosopher nor yet a poet, but with regard to basic truths he possesses a profound comprehension which scorns imitation. He cares little for logical contradictions in the expressions of his thoughts and sentiments, for it was not his object to found a system of philosophy or theology. So he adopted verse in place of prose as his instrument of expression, which helped to maintain consistency of argument without the necessity of removing logical inconsistencies.

It has often happened in the history of thought that a great creative thinker takes up all the philosophies of life that have risen before his time, weaves together their threads of many hues, and out of their contradictions creates a new unity. That Plato's philosophy is so comprehensive and so profound is due solely to the fact that he brought together the more important elements of all the theories which had been propounded before him concerning change or non-change of the universe, its creation, its conceptual and perceptual reality, etc., and created out of them a new philosophy of life. Such a thinker, if he happens to be a great personality, is never content with mere selection. He does not care to produce a beggar's cloak of patches by putting together fractions of conflicting doctrines and theories, nor is his brain the beggar's bowl containing pieces of bread of many kinds. A great thinker's thought is always creative. He uses the many and contradictory opinions current before him as his raw materials. In his mind is a new picture which he paints with colours of old, but whose outlines and features are his own. He conceives a new structure, but for its building he procures bricks and stones from ancient ruins. According to a well-known saying of Emerson, contradiction is a bogey of petty minds only, who close their eyes to many an important fact of life from fear of logical contradictions. No great thinker was ever frigh-

tened by logical contradictions. The deepest teachings of religion can only be stated in contradictions. The ultimate problems of metaphysics often become involved in verbal inconsistencies which, however, cause no embarrassment to any great philosopher. Even modern physics has arrived at a conception of matter which involves contradiction, *viz.*, that it is mere essence and also mere energy, that an atom is a particle as well as a current of energy!

Jalal-ud-Din Rumi had before him, on one side, a vast structure of thought of purely Islamic origin, which has for its basis a special conception of life and the universe, and a peculiar conception of conduct which follows from it. On the other side was the vast volume of Greek thought which was the creation of highest minds. On one side was the wisdom of faith and the Qur'an, and on the other the product of reason. On one side was logic and philosophy, and on the other the wisdom of an unlettered Prophet. Added to these were the experiences of Sufis, which also present a special conception of life. Rumi could not wholly ignore any of these bodies of thought. Whatever truth he sees in any of them, he puts it forth without prejudice and does not at all mind which party he might offend thereby, nor is he frightened by the fact that a certain opinion is logically inconsistent with another. To suppress or ignore obvious and undeniable facts of life for the sake of maintaining consistency

or harmony in thought does not appeal to him. Honesty of thought has more value with him than consistency. In all those religions and philosophies which have wrought revolutions in the world and discovered new domains in the universes of mind or space we come across important elements which reason has so far failed to harmonize.

There is great similarity between Maulana Rumi and Allama Iqbal. Both are poets of a high rank. Both are poets of Islam. The poetry of both is philosophic. Both, despite being matters of the realms of reason, give preference to experience over reason. Both seek to fortify the Self instead of denying its reality. Both contend that there is no contradiction between the Self and Selflessness if they are rightly understood, that one without the other is indeed vain and meaningless. Both differ with regard to the question of *Taqdir* (or predestination) from the opinions held by the generality of people. Both believe that *Taqdir* does not mean that the actions of each individual have been determined by God beforehand, but that *Taqdir* is nothing more than the law of life. Both are evolutionary thinkers. Not only man but rather the whole universe is rising from a lower to a higher level. There is no limit to the progress of man. By the power of his desire and purity of endeavour new worlds may not only be revealed to man but even created by him. Both believe Adam as portray-

ed in the Holy Qur'an to be the ideal which mankind must strive to realise. Both regard endeavour as life and lack of endeavour as death. Both believe immortality to be determined by endeavour for immortality. Both are completely at home with the body of thought that had been created before them and seek to bring contradictory concepts on to a higher level of thought with a view to discovering or effecting harmony between them. Owing to this natural and inborn similarity between them Iqbal considers himself a disciple of Rumi. But he is not a disciple of the ordinary aping type. He is a disciple who, by virtue of his faith, is dyed deep in the spirit of his master, though the freedom of the creative activity of time is such that the true successor of Rumi was born six centuries after ! So long as there remain people in the world who will read Rumi's *Masnavi* and rejoice in its spiritual raptures, Iqbal's poetry, too, will be read along with it and be a source of spiritual nourishment and life.

We shall now take up some of the basic conceptions of Rumi and Iqbal and compare them by means of quotations. One of those basic concepts common to the two is Love, which we take up first.

Love

In Maulana Rumi's *Masnavi* and his *Diwan* otherwise known as the *Diwan of Shams-i-*

Tabrez, we come across lines on the ecstasies of love so sweet, so enrapturing and exulting, so profound and with all so numerous, that no poet in the world's history can rival or stand comparison with him in the treatment of this theme. He regards love to be the soul of the whole universe, its Alpha and its Omega. By virtue of love everything strives incessantly to return to the source of its being. The music of the flute and the intoxication of wine are both by love. The warmth of life in every soul is from the fire of love. Love is the secret of life. Love is the instrument, and the melting fiery strains proceeding from that instrument are also from love. The delight of sight is love and it is love that tears the veil aside from the face of Being. Conditions, otherwise contradictory, are made one and harmonized in the unity of love. Love is poison as well as its antidote ; it is poverty as well as royalty. The rise and fall of the music of being and not being are by love. The movements of the stars and the union of particles, life's ecstasies of union and longings of growth, and the rise of the lover into the higher are all by the miracle of love. Love burns up all pettinesses and weaknesses and is the source of all higher morals. It is the food of all life and the cure of all ills. It kills the ailments of false prides and prestige. For mental diseases love is Plato, for physical ailments Galen. Love is the astrolabe, by which hidden mysteries may be revealed. It is the cause of movement

in the world of matter; the earth and the heavens revolve by virtue of love. It is growth in vegetation and motion in sentient beings. Love that gives union to the particles of matter, love that makes vegetation grow and the love that makes animals move and multiply—all these loves are found in man. Love, whatever its object, is a surge of the primal love and can attain to it by growth. That sheer effervescence of manly vigour which comes from the consumption of food is also a lower form of love. The love of this world of colour and perfume is a reflex of that real higher eternal love. But men should strive to rise from lower to higher forms of love and should not stop at any one stage, for stoppage is a negation of life.

In some of his finest poems Iqbal, too, has put love and reason in the scales. He is a poet of frenzy, power, emotion, intuition and creation. For all these he has only one name, and that name is love. The contrasting of love and reason is a very ancient theme in the history of thought. Nietzsche believes that when Greek civilization was in its vigour, the Greeks worshipped Dionysius who was the god of emotion and the faculty of creation, and his worshipper embraced the deity through the frenzy of love and music. The higher creations of Greek tragedy were products of the same impulse of life. This impulse is found in a larger measure in music than in painting and sculpture. It is farther from reason, but nearer to fine arts,

provided the fine arts do not fall victims to rationalism. Among the fine arts, too, music is a more faithful reflex of the impulse of life. Music is a symbolic expression of the root of life. Similar ideas about music are to be met with among the Muslim Sufis too, who were enamoured of love, and a section of them accordingly made it a part of worship. Dancing and music are a special characteristic of the disciples of Rumi. Music is employed by other systems of Sufis also for inducing spiritual raptures. What Nietzsche and Schopenhauer have said about music had been said most beautifully and with great profundity several centuries before in Maulana Rumi's *Masnavi*. How music is related to plunging into the depths of life has been expressed nowhere with such beauty and power as in the opening verses of the *Masnavi*. Maulana Rumi, by speaking of the reed at once in both real and temporal senses, has stated his philosophy of life at the very commencement of his great work. The opening lines are at once a statement of his philosophy of music and philosophy of mysticism. The reed moves because it reminds the soul of its reality and its home. The whole secret of life is in the reed, as life is in the body. As intoxication is in the wine, so is the frenzy of love in the reed. Every heart suffering the pangs of separation is moved by music, and the sadder it sounds the sweeter it seems. The logical contradiction in

the bases of life becomes one and harmonized in music, as it embraces and unites two opposite states of pleasure and pain. It is poison as well as its antidote. The reed has two mouths : one touches the truth that is in the player, the other throws out its cry into the external reality. To listen rightly and let the soul melt under its fire is not given to every man. The right hearing reveals secrets of life which, if they were declared openly, would upset all systems of knowledge and conduct. As Rumi says :

سر پنهان است اندر زیر و بم
فاش گر گویم جهان برهم زدم

In the cadences of music is hidden a secret, which, should I declare it, would upset the world.

About the mandoline (رباب) he says :

خشک تار و خشک چوب و خشک پوست
از کجا می آید این آواز دوست

It is dry string, dry wood and dry skin ; wherefrom comes the voice of the Beloved.

Nietzsche calls this passion of the soul the main source of fine arts. Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, giants of reason though they were, admit that higher poetry is born not of reason but of a kind of frenzy, and the poet who lacks this frenzy ; cannot, in spite of his mastery of language and poetic technique, write the kind of poetry that moves the hearts to their depths. This idea of frenzy that enlightens or creative

madness is common to Rumi, Nietzsche and Iqbal. Nietzsche complains that Socrates and Plato declared reason, which is a secondary thing, to be real and emotion or the fire of life, which is real and the source of all creative activity, to be unreal, and by so doing laid the foundations of a culture and a philosophy which was made up of the warp and woof of dry logic. Plato, though himself a poet, proposed to banish all poets from the "Republic" he has sketched, but admitted the value of music for the sole reason that it would help to maintain intellectual poise. Plato's idea of music differs from Nietzsche and Rumi's intuitive emotional conceptions. In Plato's opinion mythology or the stories of gods and goddesses, which were really faculties of nature personified by popular imagination, being opposed to reason were idle tales which could be utilized for the education of children and ignorant masses as diplomatic falsehoods, but had no further worth or meaning. In modern times, first Nietzsche and then Iqbal have attacked the Socratic-Platonic philosophy of life ; for the former two worship Dionysius instead of Apollo. In *Asrar-i-Khudi* Iqbal calls Plato a sheep :

راهب دیرینه افلاطون حکیم
از گروه گوسفندان قدیم

Plato, that ancient ascetic and sage, was one of the ancient flock of sheep.

This bitter criticism owes itself to that

powerful attack on Plato's rationalism which was delivered by Nietzsche, who contends that the emotional and æsthetic attitude is far superior to intellectualism. Iqbal has hundreds of verses written from this point of view. As Nietzsche and Rumi prefer music to logic, so does Iqbal consider poetry to be a surer approach to Reality than philosophy. The main spring of religion, too, like that of poetry and music, is the passion of life or the emotion of love. Nietzsche looks upon the teaching of science or a surely intellectual education to be a brainless occupation. He complains that teachers at schools and universities have made education so lifeless that no soul can receive the least warmth from it, and mere imparting of information stirs no creative emotion. Real creativeness is stirred only when the inner chords of nature and intuition are struck. He deplores that even an absorbing subject like history is taught in such a dry manner that it neither creates any enthusiasm about life nor gives birth to any high ideals. This, he believes, is due to the fact that these worshippers of cold reason have not yet been able to escape the spell of Socrates and Plato. Similarly, many teachers and critics of poetry are perfect strangers to the spirit of poetry. They take up an excellent poem, ruin it by getting involved in silly discussions on grammar, diction and philosophy and call it exposition ! In the same manner, they try to purge religious

scriptures of their mythological elements and to evaluate them by pure reason and logic, whereas the ideological structure of religious myths, which has sprung from the emotion of life, is far nearer to the facts of life than logic. Kant and Schopenhauer have broken the idol of reason by delimiting the functions of logic and reason to the external phenomena. This gives Nietzsche hope that probably, after this big idol has been shattered, the German nation will again return to a free and natural creative activity and create music, poetry, drama and romance that will spring from the depths of life rather than from the pretty commercialism of profit and loss, and whose truths will then be measured by the standards of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle's logic.

There is no doubt that during that period of his poetry which gave birth to *Asrar-i-Khudi* Iqbal was under the influence of Nietzsche. Besides the internal evidences of *Asrar-i-Khudi*, which are many and clear, I have also some personal knowledge to go upon. During his sojourn in Europe, Iqbal was much impressed by the philosophy of Nietzsche whom he later described as a believer in heart and a disbeliever by intellect. By the dawn of the twentieth century Nietzsche's thought had shaken the world of intellect and ethics like an earthquake. Iqbal was then in Europe, engaged in a deep study of the ancient and modern philosophy of the West. Most young poets and philosophers

of Europe were then enamoured of this iconoclastic thinker. One critic likened him to a mad bull which had entered a china shop and smashed all the priceless pieces. Iqbal has used the same simile with a slight change in the following line :

دیوانہ بکارگہ شیشہ گر رسید

A mad man went to a glass factory.

Every reformer is an iconoclast. Nietzsche who, besides being a poet and thinker, was also a little mad, (absorbed) had plied his iconoclastic rod in the idol-house of established values and concepts with supreme disregard of consequences. Many idols had been smashed while others were toppling to their fall.

Those who had despaired of the decrepitude and hypocrisy of the established religion and traditional morality, but had not the courage to raise a voice against them, or who had yet formed no clear notion of how the needed change could be effected, felt from the teachings of Nietzsche as if a new prophet had risen, who held forth the man of the future rather than of the present.

Until one knows the central foundational ideas of Nietzsche, it is difficult to determine which aspects of his teaching influenced Iqbal and wherein he could not agree with the former. There is apparently no unity or system in the thoughts of Nietzsche. His thought underwent many changes in the different

periods of his life, and things which he had at one time extolled without reserve became later the objects of unsparing hatred with him. There is conflict between his works and many of his utterances sound like a mad man's ravings. The best that one can do is to sift and take hold of the more prominent tendencies in his thought, and determine on the basis of these what on the whole was his philosophy of life. A brief sketch of his basic ideas is as follows :—

Religion

1. Nietzsche denies God. He believes that man cannot free himself from his present low, slave-status and make any progress until the idea of God is wiped out clean from his heart. So long as man believed in gods and mysteries, science and philosophy could not come into being, and until he shatters this last big idol, man will never rise to any higher level of life.

2. Nietzsche is a deadly foe of Christianity. It is a fact that no man before him had ever laid the axe to the very roots of Christianity in the thorough, ruthless way that Nietzsche did.

The attack that Islam had made before him on Christianity was not far-reaching enough. The Muslims held the person of Jesus to be holy and his original teaching to be sound, and more than half of Christian dogmas were incorporated by them in their own faith. The

free thinkers, too, who rose from 'the bosom of Christendom' admired the personal moral life of Jesus and only repudiated his miracles as superstition. Nietzsche denounced Christianity as the greatest enemy of human progress, and is not prepared for any compromise with it. According to him, religions are of two kinds : (1) religions of affirmation which say 'yes' to life, and (2) religions of negation which say 'no' to life. In other words, there are religions which accept life as a blessing and seek to make it better and happier, while there are others which look upon life as a curse and seek to escape it. Nietzsche calls Christianity and Buddhism religions of negation, and, therefore, for the growth, fulness and ennoblement of life he believes it necessary that these two religions should be utterly annihilated from thought as well as from practice. From the point of view of historical growth, he thinks, Christianity was a revolt of the weak and the slaves against their masters. In the battle of life, when one has not the power for frontal attack deception and meekness can also serve as good weapons. By reversing values the slaves declared their destitution and poverty to be a great blessing and real wealth, and began to teach that the weak and helpless, the poor and the needy, the homeless and the penniless, those who turn the other cheek when slapped on one and do forced labour,—these alone were fit to enter the kingdom of God. The ignorant are better than

the learned, they taught ; the poor are preferred over the wealthy, the helpless over the mighty. The beauty of nature was a delusion, and the life of the world was the everlasting punishment of Adam's sin. According to Nietzsche, it was by these weapons that the Jews defeated the Romans, the slaves overthrew their masters, and the tigers became lambs.

Morals

Nietzsche denies that good and evil are eternally predetermined absolute categories. He is a believer in evolution and in the struggle of life. He holds that life, for its own growth and well-being, decides at various stages of its evolutionary career what things are good and what are bad for a particular stage. It is possible that an act which was good at one stage may become evil at another stage. At first, the terms 'good' and 'evil' were applied to consequences ; later they began to be applied to acts leading to those consequences. Still later these terms came to be employed for motives and intentions, until at last men themselves came to be called good or bad. Being a philologist, Nietzsche tried to prove from the evidence of language that virtue originally meant power and the virtuous man was the man of power. The practice should be revived, because calling the weak and the humble virtuous only leads to the decay of the human

race. Morals are of two types : master morality and slave morality. The search of truth, courage, unwillingness to measure life by pleasure and sorrow or profit and loss, and every kind of positive and life-promoting activity are proofs of master morality, while every kind of cowardice, refusal to throw off the chains of tradition and custom, humility and meekness, contentment and lack of endeavour, alms-giving, mildness and fear of consequences, in short all varieties of negative virtues belong to slave morality. Christianity and Buddhism, according to Nietzsche, teach slave morality. He, on the contrary, teaches that every way of life or thought which makes one strong is good, while every other way of life or thought which springs from weakness, or makes one weak, is evil. The higher type of man should be a hunter, whereas the true Christian is a tame, domestic animal whose blood runs cold. Sympathy that sheds tear weakens the sympathiser as well as the one to whom sympathy is shown. The giver and the receiver of alms are both abased thereby, for alms-giving is an obstruction in the course of evolution. In the battle of life, natural selection is the right law for the procreation of better types, and he who tries to save the weak is an enemy of human progress. According to Nietzsche, whatever morals mankind has created are an obvious lie, though the lie was useful and expedient, because the brute

in man could not be humanized except by deception. But for the fictions and falsehoods of religion and morality, man could have remained a brute. He was made to believe that he was a being of a high order and under this delusion accepted the regiment of harsh rules. The established moral codes are founded mostly on custom and tradition. One who obeys tradition is called good, while one who disobeys it is considered bad. To walk in beaten paths is easy, and most people are good merely from habit and convenience. To think for oneself and act on one's own decisions requires exertion and is not always expedient. No action is good or bad in itself. Society or the state in its own interest determines what is good or bad. There is no such thing as sin in reality ; everything is innocent. By change of conditions evil becomes good and good evil. The man who chalks out his course of action according to the dictates of wisdom is yet unborn ; evolution has only taken its first step yet in this direction. Time will come when the life of man will be guided by wisdom instead of by religion or morality. The rays of that sun which will rise in the future fall at present on the peaks of the human soul, while the lower valleys are yet dark and covered by dense fog.

Religion and the fine arts have been the mother and nurse of the race of man, but when one attains youth, one needs neither the mother nor the nurse.

Political Philosophy

We may now study Nietzsche's ideas on political philosophy. He contends that all high civilizations have sprung in countries where people were divided into two classes: one of workers under compulsion, the other of free and voluntary workers. One objection against war is that it blinds the conqueror and fills the vanquished with envy and hatred. In its favour one might say that, so far as the growth of civilization is concerned, war is a kind of sleep from which men wake up with fresh vigour for constructive work.

Communists contend that the division of property and capital is based on injustice and high-handedness. But the fact of matter is that the whole civilization is based on fraud and slavery and high-handedness. These things run in the warp and woof of civilization and cannot be cured by any sudden revolution. They can be eradicated only by a gradual growth of the sense of fairness and justice.

The division of the peoples into nations will disappear in the Europe of the future. Nietzsche is an enemy of democracy, and Iqbal, too, has been critical of it in several of his poems. Nietzsche is opposed to democracy, because, he says, it is a way of suppressing free men of a higher type. The laws and morals in a democracy are based on the idea of human equality, and religions like Christianity, which encourage the growth of the base and the weak-

minded, have been responsible for spreading the false notion that all men are equal. It is a manifest delusion to which facts of history lend no support. Evolution tends to the creation of men of a higher type who think differently from their contemporaries, whereas the religions and laws based on the idea of equality consider such persons to be a public menace and seek, in every possible way, to destroy them. Life has never made any progress by public vote; that the masses are cattle is proverbial.

ازاں کہ پیروی خلق گمراهی آرد
نمی رویم براهی کہ کارواں رفت است

As imitating the masses leads one astray, we refuse to walk in the way that has been trodden by the caravan.

Nietzsche is an evolutionary thinker, but his point of view differs somewhat from the standpoint of other evolutionary philosophers. Darwin and Spencer and their followers hold that struggle for survival or the battle of life is a war of species whose object, if there is one, is that one species may become stronger and fitter for the maintenance of life than others. On the other hand, when Nietzsche speaks of the Superman, he has in mind not the race but the individual. According to him, history and nature tend or ought to tend to create individuals of a higher type, who would be exempt from the laws of social equality, who should be free in reality and not imitators, who should value truth above every consideration, gain or loss,

who should be above those distinctions of good and evil which are born of fear and hope, who should be their own law-givers, and who would consider everything that helps the growth of life to be good and everything that strangles life to be evil. If life had depended on the opinion of the masses, man would have remained lower than the lower animals. Even in those political groups which are apparently organized democratically, important decisions are made really by a few powerful individuals, while others follow them like sheep. Democracy is helpless in crises and in a nation's hour of peril. At the present time all great dictators and reformers agree with Nietzsche in his hatred of democracy, while in antiquity Plato's *Republic* was in fact a powerful attack on democracy. He contended that a democracy that could accuse a man like Socrates of ruining public morals and of being an enemy of mankind, and condemn him to drink the cup of hemlock, could not be commended anywise. A democracy of this type is in reality a conspiracy of men of low type against those of a higher type. In such a democracy men of narrow views and coarse minds with love of power manage to obtain control over the state, in which men of higher type can never flourish. Plato entered this protest against democracy at a time when his compatriots loved democracy and considered it the best form of government. Nietzsche denounced it at a time when the

whole West had become enamoured of it. Iqbal, too, presented the naked truth about it at a time when British imperialism and Western ideas were casting a spell over Eastern nations. Karl Marx and Lenin characterize the Christian church as opium for the masses, but Nietzsche contended that democracy and socialism, too, were a conspiracy of the masses and slave peoples, that they were a way of life which prevented the growth of higher minds. Iqbal calls democracy a trap invented by capitalists. Jalal-ud-Din Rumi declares the masses to be "slow-footed companions" and feels disgust for them. Ghalib, another philosophic poet of the same mind, holds the masses for a herd of donkeys and says in his peculiar humorous way that all are donkeys, though some are for Christ to ride upon while others are fit only for the anti-Christ. Ghalib's characterization is really so apt and fine that had Nietzsche heard of it, he would certainly have admired it. Iqbal, too, has at times given expression to the same thought very acutely. At one place he says it is the same demon of despotism which masquerades in the garb of democracy. At another he denounces the democracy of the equality type in the following words :

از مغز دو صد خر فکر انسانے نمی آید

You cannot create the thought of a man from the brains of two hundred donkeys.

Nietzsche's influence over Iqbal is not so

apparent in *Payam-i-Mashriq* as in *Asrar-i-Khudi* thought herein are to be found lines which show that he still considered some aspects of Nietzsche's teaching to be true and worth propagation. The direction of the religious mind is usually towards God and the aim of mysticism, Eastern or Western, Islamic or non-Islamic, is the knowledge and realization of God. But the quest of man before the quest of God, which is a distinctive feature of Iqbal's poetry, is common to him and Nietzsche. Islamic mysticism was not a stranger to this thought. Abdul Karim Jibi's famous work *Al-Insan-ul-Kamil* presents the same philosophy metaphysically. Maulana Rumi's *Masnavi* and *Diwan* have many lines on this subject, while the universe-subjugating Adam of Holy Qur'an inspires similar thoughts. This manner of thought had almost died out from among the Muslims through the vicissitudes of time when Iqbal, all of a sudden, proclaimed it with such vehemence that it sounded as if he had created a new philosophy of life. In the modern age, Nietzsche fixed his eyes so completely on the exaltation of man that no room for God was left in his thought. He is neither a theist nor an atheist; he is a humanist, but the man he adores is not the man that is in front of him. His Adam is yet unborn, and to bring him into being is, in the eyes of Nietzsche, the foremost object of evolution. The quest of the ideal man is not peculiar to Nietzsche or Iqbal. The

story is well known of Diogenes, the Cynic, who with a lamp in his hand in broad daylight was walking about in the market. Eccentric as they considered him to be, the people asked what he was searching for with a lamp in broad daylight, to which he replied that he was looking for a man. When told that a whole concourse of people was in front of him, he said they were creatures of a low degree and not a 'man' among them. It is the same Diogenes whom Rumi calls 'Shaikh,' and whose philosophy he has expounded in the form of a story in lines which Iqbal so loved that he quoted them on the title-page of *Asrar-i-Khudi* :

دی شینغ با چراغ همی گشت نرد شهر
 کتر دام ورد ملولم و انسانم آرزو است
 زین همهران سست عناصر دلم گرفت
 شیر خدا و رستم دستانم آرزو است
 گفتم که یافت می نشود جست، ایم ما
 گفت آنکه یافت می نشود آنم آرزو است

Yesterday the Shaikh was going round the city with a lamp, for, he said, 'I am tired of cattle and wild beasts and yearn for a man. My heart grieves sore over my slothful companions, and I am in search of a 'Lion of God' and a mighty Rustam.' I said, what we seek is not possible of achievement. He replied, 'I seek what is not possible to achieve.'

Iqbal's ideas on this subject meet those of Muslim thinkers, especially Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, on one side, and Nietzsche on the other. The only difference is that while in Rumi and Iqbal God is also there, with Nietzsche, in his own

words, "God is dead," and so long as man continues to worship this corpse, he will not awake to his own true self, and will not be able to make any progress. It was not possible for Iqbal to deny God like Nietzsche, but we cannot ignore the fact that when he compares man with other beings in several of his poems, in an elegant and humorous manner he gives preference to man. Even when he confronts man and God, he scores a point against the latter :

نوائے عشق را ساز است آدم
 کشاید راز و خود راز است آدم
 جہاں او آفرید این خوب تر ساخت
 مگر با ایند انباز است آدم

Adam is the instrument on which the music of love is played. He reveals secrets, yet himself is a secret. He (God) created the world and Adam beautified it ! Doubtless he claims equality with God.

خدائی اہتمام خشک و تر ہے
 خداوند خدائی درد سر ہے
 مگر یہ بندگی ! استغفر اللہ
 یہ درد سر نہیں درد جگر ہے

Being God means the burden of administering the universe ; O God, this being God must be a headache. But being a worshipper ! By the grace of God, it is a heartache, not a headache !

In that poem, too, in which occurs the line (Thou didst create the night, and I made the lamp) he speaks of man as supplementing the creation of God. About the conception of God there is an idea among

Muslim thinkers and free-thinking Westerners that man conceives of God after himself and makes every god he worships after his own image. According to the Bible, God made man after His own image. The same idea is to be found in Islamic literature: *خلق الانسان على الصورة*. A Muslim poet has turned it around and makes the Adored ask the adorer :

مرا بر صورت خویش آفریدی
 برون از خویشتن آخر چه دیدی

"Thou hast fashioned Me after thyself. What then didst thou see outside thee?"

Of the same category is the saying of Voltaire that God made man after His own image, but man returned His munificence by fashioning him after his own image! There is a quatrain in *Piam-i-Mashriq* of the same import :

تراشیدم صنم بر صورت خویش
 بشکل خود خدا را نقش بستم
 مرا از خود برون رفتن محال است
 بهر رنگ که هستم خود پرستم

"I carved the idol after my own self and conceived God after my own face. It is hard for me to get out of myself; in whatever condition I am, I worship my own self."

Iqbal does not deny God as Nietzsche did, but he takes liberties with Him and at times even becomes saucy. His well-known poem *شکوه* is the product of the same saucy mood. When Iqbal finds similar lines in Rumi, he likes them

so much that he makes them his own without acknowledgment. There is a famous couplet of Rumi :

بَازِ کَنگَرِه کَبِریاشِ مَرَدانند
فَرشتَه صید و پیمبر شکار و یزداں گیر

“ Under the towers of His Majesty there stand men who capture angels and prophets and God Almighty Himself.”

Iqbal has given expression to the same idea in the following line :

یزداں بکمند آور اے همت مردانه

“ O man of courage, cast thy noose on God Himself.”

It is not theft or plagiarism. It only shows that Iqbal and Rumi were of like mind and nature. Love, worship and realization of God are the common and ancient themes of religion and religious philosophy. But to teach men that they should ‘capture’ or ‘hunt’ prophets, angels and God Himself is a rare conceit. Rumi, Nietzsche and Iqbal are all three remarkably bold in this matter. It is quite distinct from the usual poetical or mystic mood of self-exaltation. That the aim of man’s life should be to seek God is a common theme. But Iqbal reverses the notion and says that before seeking God it is more proper for the individual to seek his own self, because “ God Himself is in search of man.”

Taqdir

Most religions teach that man is fettered

by the writ of destiny or is in the chains of *Karma*. But Rumi and Iqbal have both put a new construction on the idea of destiny. They believe that man can himself become the builder of his destiny, that the *Momin* (believer) is himself the destiny of God, so that when he changes his own self, his destiny also changes. Rumi interprets the saying قد جف القلم in a most beautiful manner. The pen of destiny has become dry, what was destined has been written and determined, and there is no more room for addition or alteration. The commonalty understands thereby that every man's actions have been fixed beforehand and whatever good or evil is done by him is done by God's will. Nonetheless, his actions are liable to punishment or reward. There is not only logical contradiction in this mode of thought, but it also shakes the foundations of moral responsibility. Moral responsibility without freedom of choice is a meaningless thing. Rumi argues that what is called *Taqdir* is only another name for the law of life, and obviously no law can be law unless it is free from the possibility of change or repeal. It is true, he says, that destiny is immutable, and the law of God cannot be changed. And the law of God is that if you steal, you and the society you belong to shall be exposed to certain consequences; and if you speak the truth, certain beneficial efforts will follow. God does not compel any one to steal, tell lies or speak the

truth. Actions proceed from free choice, but their consequences are predetermined, that is, they follow from the law which governs the universe and every individual soul. According to the Holy Quran God does not change the condition of a people until they change their own selves, which means that God conditions His own activity by the activity of the people, and has only stated an immutable law of life, which, while it leaves the human will free to make its own choice, works as changeless destiny. Iqbal turns frequently to this subject in his poems and has dealt with it also in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* :

پہاٹے خود مزین زنجیر تقدیر
تہ ایں گنبد گرداں رہے ہست
اگر باور نداری خیز و دریاب
کہ چون پاواکنی جولانگہ ہست

"Do not fetter thyself with the chains of *Taqdir*, for with this canopy of heaven there is a way out. If thou dost not believe rise and discover that no sooner hast thou released thy feet findest thou a free field."

Iqbal believes that the building of a new Adam who should create a new world and a new destiny is possible. He says—if thou change thyself, it will be no wonder if the East and the West, the North and the South also change. According to Iqbal, there is no ready-made plan preserved on any tablet beforehand of the limitless possibilities of the evolution of life. As it marches forth in its creative activity, it goes on moulding its own destiny.

تو می گوئی که آدم خاک زاد است
 اسیر عالم کون و فساد است
 ولی فطرت ز اعتجازه که دارد
 بناائے بحر بر جویش زهد است

"Thou sayest, man is made of dust and is a prisoner in this world of birth and decay. But nature, by its miraculous power, has laid the foundations of an ocean on his brook."

Life is free like the bird that perches awhile on a house-top; it is not a prisoner like the bird that has been caught in a net. There is change in the flow of time as well as in the human soul. The sword of life, fortified by blows of fate and sharpened by the whetstone of destiny, carves its own path. Besides religion, Iqbal complains also of philosophy that it has not yet abandoned the worship of reason, that it might find a way to the development of personality. Philosophy, like conventional religion, lacks courage and pride. Thinkers have shattered many superstitions, but have not yet arrived at the self-conscious man who should be informed with creative vigour by the power of love. They are still worshipping ancient idols in this idol-house of being. How can they be expected to cast the noose on God, angels and prophets, when they have not yet captured man even?

Conventional Values

The man, who does not believe in *Taqdir* as conceived by the common people, cannot be expected to be a worshipper of conventional

values. The man who seeks to preserve his individuality even against God is not the one to follow in the beaten tracks of others. Iqbal is a determined foe of convention or blind imitation and holds sin committed by free choice to be better than aped virtue :

گر از دست تو کار نادر آید
گناہے ہم اگر باشد ثواب است

"If thou accomplish something unique, it is virtue even if it is a sin."

Similar ideas are to be met with frequently in Nietzsche and Rumi. Once I had a talk with Iqbal on this subject and said there was a very peculiar line in Rumi's *Mathnawi* in which he has compared quietism and passivity with active endeavour, namely, کوششی بیهوده بہ از خفتگی (Purposeless activity is better than slumber). Iqbal's face beamed with pleasure on hearing the line and praised it highly. In his early poems Iqbal characterized conventionalism as self-murder. Later, all his life, he returned to the subject again and again :

تا کجا طور پہ درپوزہ گری مثل کلیم
اپنی مٹی سے عیاں شعلہ سینائی کر

"How long will thou beg like Moses on Mount Sinai?
Bring forth the flames of Sinai from thy own dust."

There is a quatrain in *Piam-i-Mashriq* :

اگر اگاہی از کیف و کم خویشی
یمے تعمید کن از شبنم خویشی

دلا در یوزہ مہتاب تاک
شب خود را برافروز از دم خویش

"If thou art aware of thy own worth and power, create an ocean from thy dew. My heart, how long wilt thou beg light of the moon? Lighten thy night with thine own breath."

How could the man who proclaimed the teaching of *Khudi* bear to follow in the footsteps of others, whereas he does not even want to believe in God at the bidding of others? He is in search of a free man who sees God in the light of his own awakened self. Only he who regards man as the soul of the universe can have the courage to say:

قدم بے باک تر نہی در رہ زیست
بہ پہنائے جہاں غیر از تو کس نیست

"Step ever more fearlessly in the path of life, for in this whole expanse of the universe there is none beside thee."

The earth is our wine-shop, the heavens are no more than the circulation of our own cup, and the world is but a prologue of our story. The aping of conventions spells death to the being whose essence is creativeness. When the creative energy of an individual or a people dies out and the stream of life becomes sluggish, they take the easier road of conventions and limitation. Wherever there is imitation of conventions it is obvious that life is dead and gone. On this subject Iqbal has travelled some way with Bergson, the essence of whose philosophy is that life is

change and creativeness. In those aspects of it which are stationary and are governed by conventions, it has ceased to be the restless wane, it ought to be and has become matter and body and mathematics. The movements of matter and body are bound by one law and are predetermined like mathematics. Iqbal puts the following in the mouth of Bergson :

بیجان من کہ جاں نقشِ تن انگینخت
 هوائے جلوہ این گل را دو رو کرد
 هزاراں شیوہ دارد جان بے تاب
 بدن گردد چو بایک شیوہ خو کرد

"In my soul that life made the picture of a body, the desire of self-expression made this rose two-faced. Restless life has a thousand manifestations; but when it falls into the habit of one expression only, it becomes a body."

Iqbal often advises against imitation and conventionalism as a means of fortifying the self. It is a common characteristic of all great reformers of humanity that they were not imitators of conventions and always sought to create new values. But by a strange irony of fate their followers turned their free created values into fortresses of convention. The real followers of prophets are those who ignore the beaten paths of tradition. Most individuals and communities get so bound up in the fetters of their real or imaginary past that the spirit of self-determination dies out in them and they become blind followers of established traditions, when such peoples are ground under the heels

of a despotism, their so-called reformers ascribe their degradation and misfortune to their people's becoming free in their ways and slackening in their devotion to tradition, whereas the truth is generally quite the other way about. So long as fallen races remain chained to their past, it becomes difficult and even impossible for them to create a new life for themselves. Iqbal says fearlessly :

چہ خوش بودے اگر مرد نکو پیے
ز بند پاستان آزاد رفتے
اگر تقلید بودے شیوہ خوب
پیملر ہم رہ اجداد رفتے

"What a fine thing it would be if people who seek to live good lives, released themselves from the fetters of the past! If following tradition had been a virtue, the Prophet, too, would have walked in the footsteps of his ancestors."

Nietzsche and Schopenhauer

Iqbal has written two or three pieces on Nietzsche in *Piam-i-Mashriq*, and there is one poem on Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, in which their philosophies are compared in a parable. Schopenhauer's is a philosophy of pessimism and despair. Some philosophies and religions are on the whole pessimistic in their view of life, but in Schopenhauer's philosophy such a powerful attempt has been made to fortify the bases of the pessimistic view that pessimism has become by itself a theory of life. According to Schopenhauer all phenomena of life are

the product of an all-pervasive blind will. A blind and purposeless will to live is striving to manifest itself in every way. Sorrow, misery and pain are its necessary outcome. As the source of life is a blind will, no remedy is possible of it. Pain and misery instead of happiness and well-being increase with every progress of knowledge and civilization. The struggle of life is a struggle of selfishness and greed, which is a source of misery to the vegetable and mineral worlds and to animals and men alike. Where there is life, there is conflict and misery and unhappiness. Schopenhauer thought this was also the teaching of Buddhism and Vedant. Flight from life is the best and truest ideal to seek.

Some basic concepts are common to both Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. Both believe that the will to live is the source of life. But they differ in this that whereas according to Schopenhauer life is a mere effort to continue to exist and every being strives to maintain its own self at the expense of others, Nietzsche makes a little change in this view and says that life is not merely a will to live but rather a will to power. Every effort is one way or another an effort to add to one's power. Life is not, therefore, purposeless, because its purpose is acquisition of power, and it should not, therefore, be measured in terms of pleasure and pain. The only true gain and loss is the gain or loss of power. All other gains and losses are illu-

sory. The cure of the hardships of life is not flight therefrom, but fortification of one's power. Every obstacle is a challenge to one's power, and abundance of life rather than flight from it should be the true principle of conduct. There are other stages and limitless possibilities beyond those which life has already attained in the course of its evolution. The superstitious, pleasure-loving man, who worships others and is a product of ancient moralities and religions is but a bridge which must be passed over in order that the superman be born. Brave and valiant men should be born instead of the weak pulings who wail over life. All those religions, and philosophies which teach flight from life are wrong, and those only are right which are affirmative towards life and promote the urge to growth. Pessimism is a disease in life; the man of sound body and mind delights in the struggle of life and like the mountain torrent goes dancing over difficulties. Iqbal has expounded this difference in Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's philosophies of life in a poem which opens with the following couplet :

مرغ ز آشیانه به سیر چمن پرید
خارے ز شاخ گل به تن نازکش خلید

"A bird flew from his nest for a fight in a garden, and a thorn from a rose twig pricked its delicate body."

He not only cried from bodily pain, but began also to revile the nature of the world's rose-garden. He thought the rose a mere fancy and

the thorn the true reality. Being very sensitive he began to feel the heartaches of all the birds in the garden. The stain in the tulip's heart, he fancied, was the blood of some innocent victim. He thought the rose to be tatters of a sorrow-stricken one's garment, the nightingale's song the mourner's cry, the spring a delusion and the brook a mirage and arrived at the conclusion that the whole garden was founded on pain, sorrow and delusion. This mournful realization smote his heart so deep that his song turned into blood and began to flow from his eyes. By chance a lapwing heard the wail and was moved with pity. He drew the thorn with his beak and advised him not to cry. The nature of life was not evil, he said. Only the pearl of gain was hidden in the pocket of loss. The rose produces gold by tearing its breast, and the true cure of pain is to know pain. If one became used to thorns, one would oneself become a rose-garden.

Nietzsche on Christianity

Piam-i-Mashriq has another poem on Nietzsche, to which Iqbal has added the following footnote :

“Nietzsche has made a powerful attack on Christian ethics. His brain is an unbeliever because he denies God, though in some ethical aspects his thought is very close to Islam. ‘His heart is a believer, though his brain denies.’ The Holy Prophet uttered a similar

verdict on an Arab poet Umayya ibn-ul-Salat :
 "his tongue believed while
 his heart disbelieved").

The poem is short and consists only of four couplets, but every couplet reflects some aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy. Besides, Iqbal has also stated very clearly in these verses his own attitude towards Nietzsche's teaching and pointed out in passing its relation to the teachings of Islam :

گر نوا خواهی ز پیشی او گریز
 در نثر کلکشی غریب و قنبر است
 بیشتر اندر دل مغرب فشرد
 دستش از خون چلیپا احمر است
 آن که بر طرح حرم بت خانه ساخت
 قلب او مومن دماغش کافر است
 خویشی را در نار آن نمرود سوز
 زان که بستان خلیل از آذر است

"His voice is a peal of thunder. Those who desire sweet songs should fly from him. He has thrust a sword into the heart of the West, his hands are red with the blood of Christianity. He has built his house of idols on the foundations of Islam, his heart is a believer, though his brain denies. Enter the fire of this Nimrod fearlessly, for if thou hast the faith of Abraham, thou shalt not burn. Instead, the fire itself will become a garden for thee."

These verses call for a little more explanation. What was Nietzsche's attack on Christianity based on? Free-thinkers, scientists, rationalists, evolutionalists and atheists, all had attacked Christianity from different standpoints

before Nietzsche and have done so since. But the standpoint from which Nietzsche made the attack and the boldness with which he did it are without precedent. Some had attacked the tyranny of the Church, others had attacked its stories of miracles, while still others had called into question the myths about the birth and death of Jesus. But the way Nietzsche denounced Christianity and its philosophy of life as the enemy of mankind and of progress, had not been done by any one else before. He calls Christianity a revolt of slaves, which subverted the high-mind master morality, destroyed the last elements of Greek and Roman civilization and put up a great obstacle in the path of life's evolution. All men are equal. All are born sinful. Ignorance and folly are more pleasing to God than reason and knowledge. The slave is better than his master. Heaven is for the poor, the needy and the weak. Strength is sin and helplessness the greatest virtue. This body, this matter and this world are contemptible, and the world beyond the grave is the only real world. According to Nietzsche, a teaching of this kind can spring only among slaves. It befits slaves only and they alone can understand and appreciate it. Man cannot escape physical and spiritual death unless he exterminates this teaching root and branch. Nietzsche made this attack on Christianity from the same standpoint from which Islam had attacked it before. لا رهبانية في الاسلام There is no monasticism in

Islam—was the cry of battle against that very teaching of Christianity. Nietzsche classifies religions into two groups, those that take a positive and those that adopt a negative attitude towards life, or, in Nietzsche's own words, those that say 'yes' to life and others that say 'no'. According to this classification, Buddhism and Christianity belong to the group that says 'no' to life, and Islam to the one that says 'yes'. Nietzsche did not arrive at this truth through the teachings of any religion. He hates religion, hates the God of religion and denies Him. Nevertheless, his opinion on the reality of life is so correct that, in the words of Iqbal, he has arrived at the view-point of Islam in his own disbelieving way. Iqbal appreciates only that aspect of Nietzsche's teaching which is a distinctive feature of the teaching of Islam, and Iqbal let himself be influenced by Nietzsche, because the former had already been affected by this aspect of Islam. Islam calls *Jihad* an affirmation of faith and teaches that *Jihad* is the monasticism of Islam. According to Islam, life, despite its hardships and struggles, is a blessing, to beautify and fortify which is the duty of every Muslim. Islam understood nature truly, calls itself as nature itself and says that man has been created in accordance with nature. Evolution of life, exaltation of man, subjugation of nature, respect for life, striving for acquisition of power and considering matter and body to be helpful to spiritual life—these

things are to a large extent common to Islam and Nietzsche, though their manner of treatment is very different. Islam relates these teachings to the doctrine of Unity and presents them as necessary corollaries of the latter, whereas Nietzsche neither begins with God nor ends with God. His vision is confined to nature and the possibilities of man. But as far as it goes, it is sound. Nietzsche's disbelief, too, is not very disagreeable to Iqbal. As they say, an energetic unbeliever is better than a slothful believer. The following well-known couplet of a Sufi poet sounds like an echo of Nietzsche :

خود را نہ پرستیده عرفاں چہ شناسی
کافر نہ شدی لذت ایمان چہ شناسی

"If thou hast not worshipped thyself, how canst thou know God? If thou hast not been a disbeliever, how canst thou know the deliciousness of faith?"

To Iqbal, the darkness of Nietzsche's unbelief seems to be the darkness that, according to the Eastern story, covers the spring of life. His being a believer at heart is so dear to Iqbal that he does not mind Nietzsche's being an unbeliever in the brain. The real thing in Iqbal's poetry is the heart, not the brain. The essence of life is love, not reason or logic, and love's function is freedom, creation, ennoblement, subjugation of the universe and evolution without end. All these things may be found in plenty in the rhapsodies of Nietzsche. According to Iqbal, Nietzsche is a mad man who has entered the glassmaker's shop and smashed

every article of vanity. If in doing so his iconoclastic rod also fell on some sacred vessels, he may be excused.

In *Jarid Nama*, when Iqbal arrived 'on the other side of heaven' in company with Rumi, they met Nietzsche, too, at one place. To bring together himself, Rumi and Nietzsche in the world of fancy throws a strong light on the poet's own psychology. The fact of the matter, however, is that not on the other side of heaven but in Iqbal's own heart are the three gathered together. But if the heart's own station is beyond the heavens then the rendezvous was well chosen. A poet has said very profoundly :

دل منزل خود آن طرف ارض و سما داشت
و هم است قرا این که به پہلوئے نوحا داشت

"The heart has its station beyond the earth and sky, it is only thy fancy that it resides in thy breast."

Iqbal has written many verses under the influence of Nietzsche and has written several poems on Nietzsche himself, in which he has thrown light on the different aspects of his philosophy. But in the poem under reference he has adopted a unique attitude towards Nietzsche, which is possible only to a man who is well versed in Islamic mysticism, its psychology and its history. Nietzsche went mad in the last period of his life. His biographers and critics have not yet agreed whether he was not half mad even before his madness became apparent. Lack of continuity, inconsistency and sudden

charges of moods met within his writings are ascribed to his occasional lack of sanity. He could not think steadily and systematically, and his thought used to get out of control from madness. His emotional life was of the type which Ghalib has depicted in the following line :

شوقِ عنار گسیبختہ دریا کہی جسے

"What is called a river is love which has thrown off the reins."

In accordance with the psychology of Islamic mysticism Iqbal has propounded the theory that Nietzsche was a *majzooob* (absorbed in divine love) and not mad. This distinction between madness and absorption is not known to Western medicine or psychology. Iqbal has described Nietzsche's mental condition from the view-point of absorption in several ways. He calls him 'Hallaj without the Cross'. Mansoor merged God in the human Self, and the mullas and jurists of his day put him on the cross for the heresy. But when love of mysticism became wide-spread in the Muslim world and every mulla and scholar loved to become or be known a Sufi, Mansoor's personality became so exalted that in mystic and pseudo-mystic poetry he came to be known as a model for profoundness of insight, depth of enlightenment and union with God. According to Iqbal, Nietzsche's identification of God with the perfect man or the superman was of the same kind as the utterance of Hallaj, though their manner of saying it was different.

باز این حلاج نے دار و رسن
نوع دیگر گفت آں حرف کہیں
حرف او نے پاک و افکارش عظیم
غریباں از تیغ گفتارش دو نیم

"Again this Hallaj without the cross said differently the same word of old. His speech was fearless and his thoughts high; the Westerners were cut in twain by the sword of his speech."

Iqbal regrets that the Western worshippers of reason, strangers to the experience of love and ecstasy as they were, committed his treatment to the physicians, whereas his malady was one which could not be cured by a physician. His ailment called for an enlightened master, for one who 'knew the way', but for whose advent the reason-worshipping West is not suited. His surge of life failed to find a right outlet and turned into a volcanic torrent. His wine was so strong, it melted the flask; his song exceeded the powers of the string and the instrument broke down under its frenzy.

عاشقے در آہ خود گم گشتہ
صادقے در راہ خود گم گشتہ
مستی او ہر زجاجے را شکست
از خدا بپرید وہم از خود گسست

"A lover lost in his own sighs, a true seeker lost in his own path (or in the path to his own self), his intoxication broke down every flask; he cut himself off from God and at last from his own self."

He longed to unite beauty with power, tyranny with adorableness. As he did not know.

the right method of unification, power overcame beauty and tyranny overwhelmed adorableness. There being no master to guide him on the path, he went astray. First he cut himself from God and then from his own self. The experience which comes from spiritual Ascension, he sought in the evolution of water and clay. He wished to realise the divine in the exaltation of the spirit, but sought it by the light of reason in the struggle of existence. He was on the right path so far as the negation of reality besides God is concerned, but for the complete fortification of the Self failed to step forth from *la* or No (there is no god) to *illa* or But (but God). He was lost in negation and failed to reach affirmation. He was almost in the embrace of divine glory, but was unaware of it. Like Moses, he, too, longed for the sight of God, but became diverted from it by a yearning for the sight of man. Had he found a master conversant with the experiences and stages of a soul's Godward voyage, one like Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind, he would have led Nietzsche on to the vision of the Divine. But the pity was that he was lost in the whirlpool of his own reasonings. For want of a master, instead of becoming a voyager in the path of God, he became a *majzoo*b. Would that he had found such a master! Iqbal says:

اگر ہوتا وہ مجذوب فرنگی اس زمانے میں

تو اقبال اسکو سمجھاتا مقام کبریا کیا ہے

"Had that Western *Majzoo*b been alive today, Iqbal would have taught him what the station of God is."

Iqbal says in a footnote on this couplet :
 " That famous German *Majzoob* and philosopher, Nietzsche, who failed correctly to evaluate his spiritual experiences, and whose philosophic thought put him on the wrong path."

On page 221 of *Bal-i-Jibril* are two couplets under the heading of " Europe ", in which Iqbal has given expression to Nietzsche's fears that if capitalism remained in power for some time longer in Europe, the whole of it would fall into the grip of the Jews :

تاک میں بیٹھے ہیں مدت سے یہودی سود خوار
 جن کی روباهی کے آگے ہیچ ہے زور پلنگ
 خود بخود گرنے کو ہے پکے ہوئے پھل کی طرح
 دیکھیے پڑتا ہے آخر کس کی حیولی میں فرنگ

" Jewish usurers, before whose craftiness the leopard's strength is nought, are watching since long. Like a ripe fruit Europe is of itself about to fall, let us see in whose lap it falls."

In the poem, in *Bal-i-Jibril*, on the perils of freedom of thought, Iqbal has again expressed in his own style Nietzsche's idea that freedom of thought is profitable for man of a higher type only and can only lead to confusion and ruination if exercised by base and undisciplined minds. In the poem on *مہدی برحق* (true reformer) on page 40 of *Zarb-i-Kalim* Iqbal has in mind certain weak-natured pseudo-prophets of this age, who never knew even the road to true prophethood and whom Iqbal regards as obvious liars. But it appears that in this poem he has an eye on Nietzsche as well. But he

does not call him a liar ; only he considers him a prophet who has gone astray. . One of the criteria of his *مہدی برحق* is that he should be an earthquake in the world of thought, and not merely a theological debater, book-writer and bookseller. He should not be a conventionalist nor a reviewer of ancient ideologies. Iqbal certainly had Nietzsche in mind when he wrote the words 'earthquake in the world of thought.' Even in conversation when Iqbal spoke of modern claimants of prophethood, he usually included Nietzsche in the list, though the latter made no claim of any sort nor sought to found a discipleship.

“ Khudi ”

Despite the high praise he bestowed upon Nietzsche and acceptance of his influence, the fact remains that Iqbal was never completely a follower of Nietzsche. A part of Nietzsche's thought appealed strongly to Iqbal as being conducive to the growth of life, partly because Nietzsche's philosophy of the Self was in keeping with Iqbal's own mind and partly because he wished to employ it as a lever for the uplift and revival of his own dispirited people. Iqbal profited from many thinkers and sufis, but in keeping with his own philosophy of *Khudi* he never completely became an imitator of any. He walks a while with every great thinker, but abandons the company shortly after and returns to his own path. The influences of Western

thought apparent in *Asrar-i-Khudi* contain not only the philosophy of Nietzsche but also ideas of the German Philosopher, Fichte, and of the French Jew, Bergson. The verses on page 12, in which he lays the foundations of his philosophy of the Self, are derived from Fichte, in whose philosophy the ultimate Self or Reality is an 'active I'. Activity is its nature. For moral endeavour and strife and growth it has created an 'other', in order that strife and thereby growth may become possible. Iqbal took up this view in its entirety and has so expressed it in his own eloquent and bewitching style that the dry desert of philosophy has taken on the freshness of a rose-garden, as may be seen from the following quotation :

پیکر هستی ز آثار خودی است
هرچه می بینی ز اسرار خودی است
خویشتن را چون خودی بیدار کرد
آشکارا عالم پندار کرد
صد جهان پوشیده اندر ذات او
غیر او پیدا است از اثبات او
در جهان تخم خصومت کاشت است
خویشتن را غیر خود پنداشت است
سازد از خود پیکر اغیار را
تا فراید لذت پیکار را
می کشد از قوت بازوئے خویشی
تا شود آگاه از نیروئے خویشی

خود فریبی هائے او عین حیات
 همچو گل از خون وضو عین حیات
 بهر یک گل خون صد گلشن کند
 از پئے یک نغمه صد شیون کند

عذرائی اسراف و ایی سنگینی دلی
 خلق و تکمیل جمال معنوی

شعله هائے او صد ابراهیم سوخت
 تا چراغ یک محمد بر فروخت

"The body of being is an effect of the Self; whatever thou seest, is an expression of the hidden powers of the Self. When the Self awakened itself, it revealed the world of concepts.

A hundred worlds are hidden in its being; its not-self comes to being from its self-affirmation.

It has sown the seed of hostility in the world by imagining itself to be other than itself.

It makes *from* itself the forms of others in order to increase the delight of strife.

It slays by the power of its arm that it may become conscious of its own strength.

Its self-deceptions are the essence of life; like the rose it lives by bathing in blood.

For the sake of one rose it destroys a hundred rose-gardens; for one melody it makes a hundred lamentations."

"The excuse for this wastefulness and cruelty is the creation and perfection of spiritual beauty."

"Its flames burnt a hundred Abrahams in order that the lamp of one Muhammad be lit."

The whole of this is Fichte's philosophy of 'I' and life. So far as the bases of Iqbal's philosophy are concerned, he is more influenced

by Fichte than by Nietzsche. In Fichte's struggle of life are also to be found touches of morality and spirituality, which are not so apparent in Nietzsche. Fichte is a monotheist of a type, whereas Nietzsche denies God.

Let us now cast a cursory glance on those poems of *Asrar-i-Khudi* which were written under the influence of Nietzsche, in order to appreciate the nature of that influence. The criticism on Plato on page 25 is taken from Nietzsche. Plato believed in the existence of a primal, eternal, changeless, conceptual world, and considered this mobile, changeful, perceptual world as comparatively unreal. His influence on Christian and Islamic philosophy and mysticism has been deep and lasting. Some concepts in Islamic mystic literature, which are attributed to some eminent Muslim Sufis, are in reality Plato's or derived from him. The best part of Mohy-ud-Din Ibn Arabi's *Fusus-ul-Hikm* is derived from him, and the bases of Neo-Platonism, as the name signifies, are also Platonic. These concepts entered and were so merged in Islamic theology and mysticism that to separate them from real Islam now is as painful as to remove nails from the flesh. It has been stated above that in Nietzsche's opinion the philosophy, culture and fine arts which have sprung from the influence of Plato and Socrates are all decadent and until they are uprooted, it is difficult to understand the real nature of this palpitating, throbbing Uni-

verse. Plato's influence to the extent it is met with in Christianity and Western arts and sciences, is also to be found to a somewhat similar extent in Islamic literature. After his Nietzschean criticism of Plato, Iqbal turns to Islamic literature and points out in Persian literature a tendency which, in his opinion, is the cause as well as the effect of decay. In his enthusiasm for reform he delivered an attack on Hafiz as well, which caused much hue and cry among the latter's admirers who opposed Iqbal's view in very harsh words. He had said about Hafiz :

مار گلزارے کہ دارد زهر ناب
صید را اول همی آرد بخواب

"The snake of the rose-garden, possessing deadly poison as it does, first induces its prey to sleep."

Like Nietzsche, Iqbal too was opposed to the sporadic kind of fine arts, and made Hafiz, along with Plato, a target of his shafts as a representative of Persian literature, but due to public uproar removed his name from the second edition of *Asrar-i-Khudi*. Once I asked him why he had done it and he replied that his views were still the same. He had expunged the name of Hafiz as a matter of expediency, because he feared the people might be led to oppose what he wanted to teach by their dislike of his criticism on Hafiz. If they did not share his opinion of Hafiz, they might please themselves, but they ought to ponder over the

view of literature he had advanced.

Nietzsche's influence is also perceptible to some extent in the three stages of the development of the Self. Iqbal has delineated on 44 and following pages of *Asrar-i-Khudi*. The poem is entitled: "There are three stages in the development of *Khudi*. The first stage is called Obedience, the second Self-Control and the third is called Divine Vicegerency."

In the first stage the Self is likened to the camel, which is taken directly from Nietzsche, while the other two are taken from Islamic literature. Nietzsche, too, speaks of three stages and says the soul passes through three stages, or in other words assumes three successive states in its upward journey. In the first stage it becomes a camel, in the second a lion, and in the third the child. In the camel stage the soul takes upon itself with great patience and fortitude the load of obligations, commandments and inhibitions. Having done with direction and compulsion the soul arrives at the stage of self-determination when it becomes a lion, and its own free will becomes its laws. But to create new values it is necessary that it should become a child which stands in Nietzsche's thought, for innocence and forgetfulness, when it forgets the previous stages and regards life as innocent play. At this stage the soul begins life anew, turns the wheel of life like the wheel of a toy, and becomes a solemn affirmation, a new motion to a new life, not the

effect of what has gone before.

Out of the three stages of Nietzsche Iqbal took over only the camel stage. The Holy Quran too has called attention to the structure of the camel فانظر الى الابل كيف خلقت (behold how the camel is made). The camel also stands in Islamic thought and culture as a national symbol. The fact, however, is that two of the three stages of Iqbal, namely, Obedience and Self-Control are found in the camel. Iqbal omits Nietzsche's lion-stage in the present connection, but speaks of it elsewhere. In place of Iqbal's Divine Vicegerency Nietzsche has a new creation on a new beginning which he characterises as the stage of childhood.

The verses on the Diamond and the Dew on p. 62 *f.* of *Asrar* also point out direct influence of Nietzsche's. A bird pecked at a diamond, mistaking it for a drop of dew, but was repulsed by the latter's hardness. The theme is the same in Iqbal's poem on Abul 'Ala Mu'arri. Mu'arri was by faith a freethinker and did not eat meat. A friend sent him a roast partridge hoping that perhaps the sight of the tempting dish might make his mouth water. But Mu'arri addressing the partridge asked what sin he had committed that had brought him to such a pass, and himself answered that it was a punishment for being weak. If it had been a falcon, instead of itself becoming a prey, it would have hunted other birds; weakness is the greatest crime in life.

The idea of the poem on 'Diamond and Coal' is also taken from Nietzsche. Chemically the diamond and the coal are the same. By the passage of time one gets so hard that it becomes a diamond, for hardness gives life its splendour and glory. The other remains soft and therefore wretched. The foremost principle in Nietzsche's ethics, which may be said to be chief article of faith with him is: Be hard, and he has expounded this principle by similes and metaphors.

From among Western thinkers the influences of three are more noticeable in *Asrar-i-Khudi*. As has been pointed out above, the foundation of the philosophy of the Self is taken from Fichte. The philosophy of the fortification of the Self, labour and striving and hardness is that of Nietzsche, but the poems on the nature of Time and the flux of Life are from Bergson. Iqbal remained under Bergson's influence even after *Asrar-i-Khudi*. It is a pity Iqbal makes no mention of Bergson in *Asrar-i-Khudi* and expounded the latter's whole philosophy of life under a saying of Imam Shafa'i. There was no philosophy hidden in the words of the Imam who would have probably failed to understand the philosophy which Iqbal took from Bergson and ascribed it to him. The Imam's straightness and piety gave a wide berth to this manner of thought. Bergson's philosophy of Time is nearer to atheism than to Unity. Bergson holds eternity to be the true

Reality, and identifying eternity with Time expounds the concept of Time in a profound manner, the upshot of which is this: Time is quite distinct from space, though the mind conceives of time also like space. Time is a spaceless creative force, in which change and evolution are inherent. There is no other reality beyond Time. Basing his view on the Prophet's saying لا تسبوا الدهر—do not revile time—Iqbal tried to identify Bergson's atheism with the Islamic idea of the Unity of God:

زندگی از دهر و دهر از زندگی است
لا تسبوا الدهر فرمان نبی است

"Life is by time and time is by life; 'do not revile time,' commands the Prophet."

The following quotations lend support to the view stated above:

اے اسیر دوش و فردا درنگر
در دل خود عالم دیگر نگر
در گل خود تنخم ظلمت کاشتی
وقت را مثل خط پنداشتی
باز با پیمانه لیل و نہار
فکر تو پیمود طول روزگار
ساختی این رشته را ز ناز دوش
گشتہ مثل بتای باطل فروش

"Look into thyself, O thou prisoner of yesterdays and to-morrows and behold another world in thy own heart. Thou hast sown the seed of darkness in thy soil, and hast imagined Time as a line.

Thy thought has then measured the length of Time with the measure of night and day.

Thou hast made this line (the Brahman's) sacred thread on thy shoulder and hast become, like idols, a seller of falsehoods."

تو که از اصل زمان آگه نه
از حیات جاوداں آگه نه

"Knowing not the real nature of Time, thou art ignorant of life everlasting."

ایں و آن پیداست از رفتار وقت
زندگی سرپست از اسرار وقت
اصل وقت از گردش خورشید نیست
وقت جاوید است و خود جاوید نیست

"This and that is born of the march of Time; life is a secret of the secrets of Time.

The cause of Time is not the revolution of the Sun; Time is everlasting whereas the Sun is not."

وقت را مثل مکان گسترده
امتیاز دوش و فردا کرده
وقت ما کو اول و آخر ندید
از خیابان ضمیر ما دمید

"Thou hast extended Time like space and made distinctions of yesterday and tomorrow.

Our Time, which has neither beginning nor end, blossoms from the flower-bed of our minds."

Conclusion.

It is not my object to minimise the greatness of Iqbal by pointing out the sources of his thought. Poetry is of many kinds and so are the poets of many types. There are lyrical poets and there are epic poets and social poets.

There are those who sing of sex-love and others who sing of divine love. Some are patriotic poets and some are poets of nature. There are poets of the past, the present and of the future. Some are didactic poets and some are nationalistic poets; some are mystic poets and some are poets of drunken orgies. It would be very difficult to answer the question—in which of these several categories Iqbal should be placed. His poetry is so comprehensive and so versatile that scarcely any kind of poetry seems to have escaped him. It may be said with truth, however, that didactic and philosophic features are on the whole prominent in his poetry. The prophetic element, to be met with in all higher poetry, became apparent in the latter part of his poetic career. There is room in this paper only for making briefly an estimate of Iqbal as a philosophic poet. But before we proceed to this estimation, it is necessary to appreciate the mutual relation of philosophy and poetry, which should help us in arriving at a true estimate of Iqbal.

Every combination is possible in the natural aptitudes of man. It is commonly believed that certain aptitudes do not go well with certain other aptitudes. For instance, it is believed that a mathematician or a scientist cannot be a *litterateur*, or a philosopher, being a dry logician, become a poet. Even inside the field of poetry it is said that a poet who is a master of one style or subject may be helpless in another.

But the history of thought and human achievement shows that, though characterizations of this kind are generally correct, there is no comprehensive and infallible rule, according to which it may definitely be said that such and such aptitudes cannot combine in one single person. It is for this reason that the Holy Quran, while it lays down a general rule about poets that their lives are anything but exemplary and that they cannot be true guides for others, makes exception of those who are men of faith and principle, and lead good lives.

Here we are concerned only with the question—what kind of a thinker a poet can be, who, besides being a poet, is also a philosopher. Obviously, if thought is taken to mean only versified logic, there is little room for it in poetry. Versification of philosophy does good neither to philosophy nor to poetry. Creation and rational systematization of thought with a view to drawing conclusions is not the business of poets. A philosophic poet is not, therefore, a man who undertakes the creation of wisdom and knowledge through the medium of verse. Poetry is a peculiar way of feeling, sensitivity and expression. Great philosophic poets have done no more than this that they clothed in poetry thoughts and concepts created by their own or another people, which had become the common property of all educated men, and into which they breathed such a spirit that they won everlasting fame thereby. Poetry is the

language of the heart, not of the brain. But the heart and the brain both belong to man, and it is not necessary that they should be forever talking divergently. The language of the brain can also be interpreted in the language of the heart, though the chief occupation of philosophic poets has been, more often than not, to beautify and render pleasant, by clothing in poetry, the general experiences of life, the thoughts created purely by philosophers, and the concepts and experiences of Sufis. The Fine arts mean that their creation should be beautiful and appealing to the heart and that is the real business of poets. The excellence of a poet consists in his sensitiveness and his manner of expression. He gives beauty to thoughts, concepts and experiences which have become the world's current coin and bestows on them the power to move the hearts. The greatness of a poet does not consist in the newness of his ideas. His business is to render known ideas, moving and delightful. The ideas, which are purely the products of the brain, and as such keep whirling round and about the heart, find entrance into the sanctuary of the heart by the magic of poetry, and the listener feels as if the truth had dawned upon him for the first time, though possibly he had been hearing it all his life. What really happens is that without the poet's art it failed to travel from the ears to the depths of the heart. Memory had preserved the ideä ; only if it had not struck the clouds of

the heart until the poet's voice stirred it. Iqbal makes a beautiful comparison between wisdom of pure reason and wisdom as it emerges from the vats of poetic wine :

حق اگر سوزے ندارد حکمت است
 شعر بے گردد چو سوز از دل گرفت
 بو علی اندر غبار ناکه، کم
 دست رومی پردهٔ محکم گرفت

"If truth lacks fire, it is philosophy; when it receives fire from the heart, it becomes poetry.

"Bu Ali (Avicenna) is lost in the dust-cloud stirred up by the she-camel while the hand of Rumi falls straight on Jalkanuin's curtain."

It would be an injustice to say that the pearls of wisdom Iqbal has strung in his poetry were borrowed from other jewellers. Until the diamond is cut, until the pearl is strung in a wreath and until gems are set in jewellery, they are no more than pieces of shells and stones. Poetry owes it to Iqbal that he gathered from the East and the West, the past and the present, those jewels which shine like stars in the firmament of the human soul, and with unique artistry cut and strung and set them to such perfection that they will for ever remain an inspiration to the race of man. The world of poetry which is the world of the human heart has been enriched, and the taunt against Urdu and Persian poetry that its field of thought is limited and that the poets keep hovering about the same old ideas, has been removed. No great philosophic poet, whether it is Rumi or

‘Attar, Sanai or Goethe, Tennyson or Browning has done more than this. There is, besides, one peculiarity in Iqbal’s philosophic poetry, which is rare, if not non-existent, in other philosophic poets. Inasmuch as thought is concerned, he has not followed wholly either Rumi or Nietzsche or Bergson, Karl Marx or Lenin. In weaving the tapestry of his thought he has borrowed some coloured threads and a few sketches from this thinker or that, but the completed tapestry is not a copy of any of theirs : in building the edifice of his thought he has utilized their ideas only as bricks and stones. Iqbal belongs to the category of those philosophic poets who have their own standpoint and their own philosophy of life, which cannot be explained by reference to ideas derived from this source or that. Goethe, who, in a sense, is a forerunner of Iqbal, has pointed out this fact by a remarkable simile. Apart from the edifice of my thought, consider, he says, the construction of my body. Can you explain my personality by reference to things I have assimilated as food? How senseless it would sound if someone suggested that Goethe was the outcome of so many hundreds of goats and cows and pigs, and the extract of so many tons of vegetables and food-grains, and that by entering his body these things had become Goethe! The same is the case with Iqbal. In Iqbal are to be found Rumi and Nietzsche, Kant and Bergson, Karl Marx and Lenin, and,

in respect of poetry, also Bedil and Ghalib. But after entering Iqbal not one of them retains his identity. The perfect and godly man of Rumi embraces the superman of the unbelieving Nietzsche and becomes the Iqbalian man. Bergson's atheism unites with the monotheism of Islam to become something quite new. Probing more deeply one meets with a strange peculiarity in Iqbal, namely, that he unites together apparently opposite and conflicting views, and some critics are even of opinion that Iqbal has failed to harmonize some of those conflicting ideas and adopts whatever he pleases from whatever source it comes according to the mood of the moment. The same objection was raised against Plato, and the same against Rumi and Nietzsche. Who can say whether it is at all possible for any great genius to harmonize the many and various ideas, conceptions and experiences about life? The great merit of Iqbal is this that he weaves the warp and woof of many colours into delightful patterns. One may or may not be convinced by the logic, but the expression and the treatment are so charming that one senses no conflict or contradiction when reading Iqbal's poetry.

Iqbal regards the seer Rumi as his Master. Rumi is the guide in the flight through the heavens and beyond, and the reality underlying facts and experiences is revealed to the disciple by his Master. The dialogue between the Master and Disciple in *Bal-i-Jibril* is also a

dialogue between Rumi and Iqbal. After the Holy Prophet, it is Rumi with whom Iqbal stands in a profound spiritual relationship. Iqbal even launches at times an adverse criticism of other philosophers, but the faith in Rumi is for ever deep and unshakable, and the higher he rose in intellectual and spiritual development, the deeper became the relationship.

The fact of the matter is that if a freeman like Iqbal could be called the disciple of any man, it is only of Rumi. Why of all the great Sufis of Islam did Iqbal choose Rumi for his Master? The answer is that Rumi's mysticism has a distinctive position among the various types of Islamic mysticism. The confrontation of love and reason, to which Iqbal has devoted a large part of his poetry, is a special theme of Rumi. Iqbal has not merely recapitulated the thought of his Master but has, instead, given additional charms of his own to the subject. One meets with an abundance of ideas of movement and evolution. Rumi believes in freedom of the will as against compulsion. Rumi's idea of *Taqdir* is quite different from the generality of Muslim thinkers. The destiny of man, according to him, is *Jihad* or endeavour. Human nature and its possibilities of evolution are treated in Rumi's philosophy with such freedom that in boldness of thought he seems to be a forerunner of Nietzsche. Rumi believes in personal immortality and says that man does

not get absorbed in God like a drop of water in the ocean. Instead, he retains his individuality like the lamp alight in daylight, or as a piece of iron which becomes red-hot as fire when put in fire and yet it retains its individuality. The ideas of fortification of the Self, creation and building of personality and assertion of 'I' which Iqbal loved so well and which are an outstanding feature of his poetry, are met with frequently in Rumi :

دانه باشی مرغانت بر چند
غنیچه باشی کودکانت بر کنند
دانه پنہار کن سراپا دام شو
غنیچه پنہار کن کیاہ بام شو

"If thou art a grain, little birds will pick thee up ;
If thou art a bud, children will pluck thee off.
Conceal the grain and be wholly a net ; keep thy bud
hidden and be the grass that grows on house-tops."

Subjugation of the universe and the rise of man is, like Iqbal, also a favourite theme of Rumi :

آنکہ بر افلاک رفتارشی بود
بر زمیں رفتن چہ دشوارشی بود

"Why should it for one, who walks on the skies, be
difficult to walk on the earth ?"

Rumi's best ideas are met with in Iqbal in a new light, but owing to the demands of the age the disciple has surpassed the Master in some matters. Only traces of Iqbal's philosophy of nation-building and collective life are to be

found in Rumi. The beauty, the detail and comprehensiveness with which Iqbal has treated this subject are entirely his own. Love with Rumi is confined, in a large measure, to the contemplation and love of God, but becomes a passion for creation, subjugation and evolution with Iqbal who has created on this subject novel conceptions rarely to be found in the Master's work.

Iqbal does not follow Nietzsche to the extent he has followed Rumi. Of all the creations of Nietzsche Iqbal liked only the ideas of the building of personality, fortification of the Self and the rise of man. But in Nietzsche's thought the destructive element is larger than the constructive. The idea of power rises in him so high above that of beauty that life becomes a mere field of battle. But in Iqbal there is a philosophy of *Bekhudi* or Selflessness as well, besides that of *Khudi* or the Self, which he considers to be incomplete without the other. In Nietzsche the idea of individual freedom is so strong and overwhelming that the individual's relation to society and the universe becomes extremely vague and indefinite: the sense of power towers high above the sense of beauty. The ideal man of Iqbal has pride as well as devotion, surrender and acquiescence along with assertion. Nietzsche is an enemy of democracy and equality and has nothing but contempt for the poor and the weak. Iqbal, too, looks upon the present forms of democracy as a

fraud. but he seeks after the right kind of equality on a higher plane and believes in a God who commands His angels to rise and wake up the poor in His creation. With Nietzsche, power is the only criterion of virtue, and his conception of the struggle for existence is cruel, pitiless and tyrannical. But with Iqbal mere power is no criterion of virtue. Nietzsche denies God, while Iqbal is a monotheist. Nietzsche is a *majzooob*, whereas Iqbal is a sober man of wisdom. Iqbal wants to elevate the whole human race, whereas Nietzsche's vision is confined to a few supermen, who are the sole product of the whole strife of life. Nietzsche based his ethical philosophy on Darwin's theory of life. His dream that, according to the theory of evolution, the man of the future will be so high above the present man as the latter is above worms and insects, could have infused much vigour in human ideals, but for the unfortunate circumstance that, for some reason or other, Nietzsche also believed very strongly that nature keeps repeating its events eternally and for ever. What is happening now has also occurred before. The creation now extant has been in being before and will go on coming into being again and again. This belief in eternal repetition is a contradiction on his passion for evolution. If movement is in reality not evolutionary but cyclic, and what is now taking place is only a repetition, the whole struggle of life becomes meaningless and the creation of a new

man a purposeless endeavour. Contradictions are frequent in Nietzsche, but the conflict of evolution and repetition is remarkable. Rumi and Iqbal are both free from such contradictions.

ہر لحظہ نیا طور نئی برق تجلی
اللہ کرے مرحلہ شوق نہ ہو طے

"Every moment a new Sinai and a new flash of glory!
May God, love's journey never end!"

Maulana Rumi says, My life is a continuous ascension, I began with loose particles of dust, and passing through the stages of minerals, vegetation and animals, have arrived at the station of man.

مردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم
پس چہ ترسم کہ ز مردن کم شوم

"I died to animality and became a man. Why should I fear that when I die I shall become less?"

Rumi the Seer believes that in life there is no retrogression or repetition. In this view Iqbal agrees with Rumi, and both are opposed to Nietzsche.

IQBAL AND MYSTICISM

گفتم کہ یافت می نشود جستہ ایم ما

گفت آنکہ یافت می نشود آنم آرزوست روی

THERE is a type of critical incompetence, alas, too frequent, that tries to hide its native sterility behind a barrage of fine and impressive words. Vague thinking, ill-formed generalizations, diffusive and rambling development of half-baked ideas often acquire a deceptive appearance of exactness and solidity by the well-known trick of camouflaging words. In every age there is a fashionable stock-in-trade of these serviceable, though sadly misused, terms that prop up many a shaky and ill-constructed edifice of theories, philosophical and critical. In our own age many a harassed writer must have been piously grateful to words like 'mystic,' 'psychology,' 'sensibility' and many another for clearing difficult hurdles for him. *Sui generis* they are quite respectable words, having precise and clear meanings; the fault lies with those enthusiastic inventors of cheap theories, surrogate philosophies and shoddy opinions who give them vague, inexact and protean meanings, and make them private symbols. Sound critical

thinking and writing, however, are practically impossible without a vocabulary, precise and unambiguous in meaning, definite in connotation, so that the reader may be sure of the meeting-ground between himself and the author or critic, and, if need be, can fix unerringly upon any weak link in the chain of ideas, making it the basis of discussion. No effective communication between two minds is possible unless the terms of reference are clear and exact.

The word 'mysticism,' along with words derived from it, lends itself easily to distortion and the type of maltreatment mentioned above, because of its peculiar pliability in an age when mystic experience is comparatively rare, and, therefore, unfamiliar. Most people know that 'mystic' means something; but what it actually does mean is a different matter altogether. Unfamiliarity results in a great latitude being given to the interpretation of the term, everybody has his own version of the meaning, and the merry game of guessing goes on. The results are bewildering in variety. Drug-induced emotional effervescence, morbid moanings, adolescent day-dreams, vague raptures, and neurotic melancholia are all labelled 'mystic experiences' by people hankering to get a kick out of their placid emotions. At a higher mental level there is a frequent tendency to consider 'mystical' and 'metaphysical' as interchangeable terms, leading to interminable

confusions. A similar vagueness of mind is the source of the very recurrent confusion between the 'mystical' and 'devotional' in literature.

Perhaps the subtlest and most easily misleading shape that a heretical theory about the nature of the mystical has assumed is presented in Henri Bremond's dissertations upon 'pure poetry.' The error is based upon the dogmatic but understandable assumption (really unconscious in nature) that since the effect of the poetic and mystic experience upon our sensibility are often so similar as to be practically identical (or in Bremond's view, always and actually identical) the sources of these experiences are identical, too. Of course, Bremond does not argue in this fashion, which clearly exposes the fallacy of the theory. He approaches the problem from the opposite end! the spiritual quietude and emotional serenity, the abandonment of the self to the mood and atmosphere created by poetry, the ecstasy which accompanies it are indications of the mystical nature of all poetic activity, which is always aspiring *a rejoindre la priere*, as he very succinctly says. Poetry has become an esoteric cult with him: '*La poesie est mystere et l'initiation qui nous occupe, pause de quietude et de silence devant le mystere poetique . . . nous nous offrons au rayonnement de la poesie, nous nous abandonnons a elle, et dans la quietude silencense qu'elle impose a nos activites intellectuelles, nous*

vous laiss ons faire par elle comme parlent les mystiques.

This is hardly the occasion to refute the theory of Bremond, and show up this too facile an apotheosis of poetry for what it really is. But it is necessary to emphasize the impossibility of discussing mysticism unless ambiguities are cleared away, and our statements have precise and clear-cut connotations. If I am talking of mysticism *a Rumi*, and you are interpreting it *a l'Abbe Bremond* we shall never arrive at mutual understanding and any profitable conclusions.

In discussions of the mystical the greatest difficulty is presented by the nature of the theme itself, which abides rational analysis and formulation. The mystic's quest and his achievement of it lie beyond the sensible and the apparent. He tears the fabric of Form and of Appearance to arrive at the core of Reality and commune with absolute Being. The mystic path is an arduous one, and our mind and our senses are powerless to follow him. As Iqbal says :

بو علی اندر غبار ناقه گم
دست رومی پرده محمل گرفت

He is the denizen of a world different from the one where men and women fall in love, hurt each other, suffer, plan and fail and reach out for things the mind can understand and the senses perceive. His feelings are not

quite so easily understandable, as, say, falling in love with Miss A or 'falling out with Mr. B. Miss A conforms in appearance to certain standards of beauty, and so an infatuation for her is fairly comprehensible to most people. Mr. B. is a club bore, and your desire to strangle him is shared by others. But falling in love with God or the Cosmic Soul is a different affair altogether. So is your hatred of spiritual Evil. The whole apparatus of values and æsthetic standards is powerless to measure or cope with this sort of feeling. The ordinary intelligent man unable to apprehend this infatuation for an Object that cannot be encircled by the mind or realized by the senses naturally considers it a mere delusion.

There is, thus, a core of definite arbitrariness about the mystic feelings. It has laws of its own and values that cannot be tested by touchstone or normal experience-standards, in the ordinary sense of the word. It is a state of feelings and of the spirit that links up the finite individual with Infinity ; and its validity lies in the inner certitude of the mystic, his ineffaceable conviction that his quest is for all that really matters to man, and that the vision splendid is the essence of actuality itself. The validity cannot be established or reputed by the reason or the ordinary processes of ratiocination. That is why commonsense often condemns the mystic as an impractical visionary, unbalanced in his mind. But it requires what

we may call a divine practicalness to hitch one's wagon, not to a traction engine but to the stars, and a superfine sanity to fling aside the illusory and temporal for the real and permanent.

Mysticism is based upon the recognition of a possibility of communion between man and God; either directly or through some channel that takes on for the mystic a conscious and active individuality. It is, therefore, an interaction between consciousnesses a mode of operation of Being, excluding everything that is not Being. Further the mystic believes that everything carries a fragment of Eternal Life in its bosom, and so the mystic's idea of the significant and the insignificant is based upon a scale of values that is super-rational or (not to be too dogmatic) ultra-rational :

To see a world in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an Hour

is the statement of actuality to a mystic.

The potentiality for mystic experience does not correspond with intellectual development or the development of the sense of civilized values. The mystic is like a radio set attuned to receive certain wave lengths; so this potentiality is a state of the sensibility. Neither any particular brand of religious dogmas nor any peculiarities of racial temperament are especially suitable for that spiritual rebirth which always goes with the

mystic experience. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and the transfiguration may come to the humblest and the least taught ; only the windows of consciousness must be clear and transparent enough to show the Vistas of Eternity. The soul, being infinite, as Pascal says, cannot be satisfied with the finite. It is like a bottomless sack that can only be filled in by the Eternal and the Infinite.

Of course, all mystics are not cut to the same pattern. There are those who seek ; and there are those who find effortlessly—those for whom the veil is drawn aside, to use an imagery of the mystics themselves. Even their yearning is made more poignant by the remembrance of a past communion. To this band of the Illuminated belong St. Teresa, Ibn-al-Arabi, St. John of the Cross, Hallaj, Ibn-al-Farid and Blake. There is a serenity in their tone which bespeaks attainment, a vivid and piercing sincerity in their expression which is a witness of the actuality of their experience.

Iqbal does not belong to this band of the Illuminated. There is nowhere in his poetry the evidence of an actual mystic experience. His acceptance of the superiority of the mystic experience over a large variety of other (perhaps more congenial) experiences, is like his belief in the Unknown. A matter of faith and of intuitive conviction. The bias of Iqbal's sensibility is obviously philosophical, in its self-expression always tending towards intellec-

tual and conceptual formulation. One of the most patent proofs of his intellectual and artistic integrity is his constant refusal to fake the type of mystic experience found in the poetry of Blake or Tahira Qurrat'ul'Ain, though the use of mystical imagery and symbolism has become a part and parcel of Urdu and Persian poetical conventions. Even when he uses these symbols and metaphors they are either illustrative of an attitude towards experience or give precision to an argument where imagery is more effective than abstract statements since he is speaking of a state of feelings and of the soul that lends itself more easily and effectively to metaphorical concretization than to generalized statements.

In the preface to his 'Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam' Iqbal speaks of men 'to whom it is not possible organically to assimilate an alien universe by reliving, as a vital process, that special type of inner experience on which religious faith ultimately rests.' From his works one senses that Iqbal's attitude towards mysticism is founded upon the belief that one can assimilate, by reliving as a vital process one's inner experience,—a universe that is itself conscious and vital: one can train oneself to be more and more harmoniously attuned to the Infinite. It is only occasionally that Iqbal speaks of the mystic communion in a rather intimate manner. In one of his fairly early Urdu poems

he tries to communicate his yearning :

کبھی اے حقیقت منتظر نظر آ لباسِ مجاز میں
کہ ہزاروں ساجدے تڑپ رہے ہیں مری جبین نیاز میں

The tone is characteristic of Iqbal: the use of the abstract حقیقت the expectancy that reveals the incompleteness of the experience and the absence of a deeply emotional tone which shows he is waiting for the hitherto alien and unfamiliar. The subtle ambiguity of حقیقت منتظر reveals an interesting aspect of Iqbal's thought—the desire for Incarnation is as intense in Youth as in the worshipper who waits for it. God is in search of man even when man forgets Him, when he turns towards God a state of tense expectancy is created like the tenseness between two positive and negative electric poles brought near each other. The flash of the electric spark is like the sudden splendour of the actual vision. Elsewhere Iqbal speaks of the Questing God:—

ما از خدائے گم شدہ ایم، او بہ جستجو ست
چوں ما نیازمند و گرفتار آرزوست

One of the poems in پیام مشرق reveals perhaps a later stage of mystic initiation :

منم کہ طوف حرم کردہ ام بتے بہ کنار
منم کہ پیش بتان نعرہ ہائے ہوزدہ ام
دلہ ہنوز تقاضائے جستجو دارد
قدم بہ جاذبہ باریک تر ز مودہ ام

The breaking up of the scale of accepted values, the demolition of the barrier between the sacred and the profane is characteristically mystic. The questing tone is more sharp-edged, and is brought to a relief against the background of personal experience that is hinted at. But it is rather dangerous to speculate about these lines. There is an elusive suggestion of a leavening of irony in the poem, probably as a challenge to a too facile acceptance of the seriousness of the poet's mood.

In a great many of the quatrains in *شعله طور* also there is the same effect of ambiguity. The impression of actuality is absent, there seems to be a desire to assimilate emotionally what he believes in, but it does not form a part of the vital process, and so the communication is not vivid and effectively artistic. Perhaps it can be best understood by placing it against the poetic transmutation of an actual state of mystic feelings. To one's mind the aptest example is provided by a poem of Qurrat-ul-Ain quoted by Iqbal in his *Javid Namah* where occur the following lines :—

از پیچ دیدن رخت همپو صبا فتاده ام
 خانه بخانه در بدر کوچه کوچه کو بکو
 مهر ترا دل حزی بافته بر قماش جان
 رشته برشته نخ به نخ تار به تار پو به پو
 در دل خویش طاهره گشت و ندید جز ترا
 صفحه به صفحه لا به لا پرده به پرده توبه تو

The effect of immediacy, spontaneity and intense subjectivity stands out in bold relief against the discursive tone of Iqbal's poem. The personal and emotional tone of :

سحری نگارستم قدمی زباده به بستم
 فاذا رأيت جماله طلع الصبح لائما

or the consuming ecstasy of Dante's

O abbondante grazia, ond' io presunsi
 ficar lo viso per la luce eterna
 tanto che la veduta vi consunsi !
 Nel suo profondo vidi che s'interna,
 legato con amore in un volume,
 che cio ch'io dico e un semplice lume.

Or the intense conviction of Vaughan's ;

I saw Eternity the other night
 Like a great Ring of pure an endless light,
 All calm as it was bright ;

or the note of agonized love in St. John of the Cross's :—

His hand with gentle care,
 Did wound me in the side,
 And in my body all my sense died.

or the mytic dread in Pascal' :

' Mon Dieu, me quitterez vous ? Que je ne'n sois pas
 separe etterne lement ! '

or the terrific simplicity in Hallaj's
 انا الحق are different phases of spiritual rapture,
 of personal encounters that lay outside Iqbal's
 experience. As has been pointed out, thanks to
 certain conventions in Persian and Urdu poetry,
 he could easily have bolstered up some of his
 poems with faked emotions and manufactured
 events. He, never does it, because he is too
 level-headed to muddle up what he wants with
 what he actually has, too honest a thinker to

give an impression of having arrived at the goal of his mental quest when he hasn't half traversed the road.

In his rejection of the mind (عقل) as a guide of life and his acceptance of Love in the same role Iqbal shows himself a true follower of the mystic path (*tariqah*). The basic conflict between the two, symbolizing God and the Satan, has been so repeatedly pointed out in Iqbal's poetry that every aspect of life seems to be finally resolved into a pattern that is made of the contrast between light and darkness, and the end of life seems to be its emergence from the shadows into the dazzling light of love. Here the influence of Rumi seems to have been the deepest on Iqbal, which is also shown by his use of Rumi's metre pretty often, and quite frequently by the unconscious imitation of his rhythmic effect.

Let us for some time turn away from his poems to one of his lectures that is more pertinent, perhaps, to the objects of this volume. In his 'Six Lectures' he discusses at one place the nature of the mystic experience. For greater charity in the presentation of his point of view he has taken up the different facets of his subject separately. It will be convenient to take up the various aspects of mystic experience that lend themselves to some sort of generalization separately.

The first point he draws our attention to is the immediacy of the mystic experience

which 'in this respect does not differ from other levels of human experience.' He then goes on to distinguish between experience and 'a system of concepts mutually related to one another and having no reference to experience.'

As a broad distinction between experience of all types and system of concepts the statement is quite adequate. The mystic experience involves an emotional state analogous to the excitement of feelings due to normal human experiences. The mystical is nearer normal experiences than intellectual concepts, because its ultimate effect is upon regions of consciousness that are affected by other emotional experiences. But all normal experiences are based upon sense-perceptions or are ultimately traceable to our sense-perceptions; whereas the mystic experience is quite independent of the sensible world. The channels through which it comes to us have no truck with our sense. It is difficult to believe, then, that it does not differ from other 'levels of human experience.' After all the mode of its operation is different, and its relation with its sources cannot be comprehended by the mind's as our normal emotional responses, because of the mind's familiarity with our sense-perceptions, can be easily related to their sources. Of course, from a valuation point of view and the effect on our sensibility, the similarity that Iqbal finds between the two is quite valid.

The second point of interest is the

unanalysable wholeness of mystic experience ! He differentiates it from other experiences, giving an interesting illustration. ' When I experience the table before me innumerable data of experience merge into the single experience of the table, out of this wealth of data I select those that fall into a certain order of space and time and round them off in reference to the table.' Here Iqbal is denying, by inference, that immediacy to normal experiences which he associates with them in his first statement. Selection is a process involving time, however minute in duration, and thereby lends itself to analysis whereas the mystic experience being immediate and whole does not lend itself to division and analysis. Iqbal clearly develops this distinction between the two modes of knowledge ; but unlike William James he thinks that ' this difference of the mystic state from the ordinary rational consciousness does not mean discontinuance with the normal consciousness. He bases his opinion upon the argument that ' in either case it is the same reality which is operating on us.' In the normal experience consciousness takes in Reality piecemeal selecting successive isolated sets of stimuli for response. ' The mystic state brings us in contact with the total passage of Reality. Reality is brought home to our consciousness as ' a single unanalysable unity, in which the ordinary distinction of subject and object does not exist.'

Now, the special distinction of the mystic state is a consciousness that the Reality apprehended in that state is independent of temporal and spatial qualifications. As Iqbal says elsewhere in the same lecture, the mystic is observed with the sense of the unreality of serial time ; so, to begin with, the idea of the 'passage of Reality' is completely absent from the mystic's consciousness, because it involves the consciousness of serial time. Our normal consciousness recognized the accretion of minute sections of the spatial and temporal in its apprehension of experiences. The two attitudes, that of the mystic and the ordinary man, are fundamentally different, because the whole of Reality in the mystic sense is not the sum of different parts, but, as Iqbal puts it, 'a single, unanalysable whole.' The mystic consciousness is not an intensified version of normal consciousness ; it is different, as it does not depend upon sense-perceptions or logical processes. Besides, it is not necessary that the same sort of consciousness should be involved in experiencing different facets of Reality. Iqbal's statement elsewhere in 'Six Lectures' that in its maturity Hallaj's experience points to 'unknown levels of consciousness' is an interesting comment upon the theme.

To the sceptic and the rationalist perhaps the Achilles heel of the mystic is his assertion that in moments of ecstasy he is in 'intimate association with a unique other Self, transcending,

encompassing and momentarily suppressing his own private personality.' According to them though the state is passive 'the otherness of the self-experienced' is not only non-proven; it is based upon a delusion, a momentary hallucination which makes the experience the fruit of a sub-normal psychological condition. The modern gospel of St. Freud goes a step further and reduces the mystic to an intellectual *cretin* whose sublime vision is nothing but the sublimation of unvariable sexual perversions. Aldous Huxley, who always likes to be in the swim of the current scientific or pseudo-scientific fashions, traces the ecstatic spiritual states of St. Francis and his act of self-humiliation committed in that state, back to their so-called original sources—sexual abnormality and pious hysteria.

In one of his subtlest discussions of mysteries Iqbal shows up the superficiality of this point of view. To demand a scientific proof of the existence and individuality of the other self is really evading the point at issue, since the channel through which the knowledge of this self emerges is not sense-perception, which is not the only type of knowledge. Iqbal gives an analogous example from our social experience. 'We possess no sense for the experience of other minds . . . Whether we apply the physical criterion or non-physical and more adequate criterion our knowledge of other minds remains something like inferential only.'

The mystic's consistency, the fact that in his non-ecstatic moments he behaves and thinks like a sensitive and intelligent being, the absence of contradiction between the two states, the perfect normality and adequacy of his artistic expression of mystic experience and the coherence between different mystic states all indicate that he is eminently sane.

The intensity and vividness of the communion often produces the impression of the mystic's self and the other self, a sense of the submergence of his own personality into the other personality, and the fusion of the two. Pantheistic doctrines, and Blake's 'I am Christ and so are you' are examples of this sort of belief. On the other hand even in moments of the most intimate association the realization of the transcendence of God may remain clear in the mystic's consciousness, in spite of the exhilarating sense of his own freedom from limitations of ordinary mortality. Amongst the Islamic mystics Hallaj, with his bold assertion, 'I am Haq (the creative truth)' seems on the surface to be the most pantheistically-minded. Orthodoxy branded him as a heretic, and even his most fervent admirers have not been able to see that the statement can be reconciled with normal Islamic orthodoxy. It was left to Iqbal's keen vision to discover that no unorthodoxy is involved in Hallaj's ineradicable belief. 'The true interpretation of his experience is not the drop slipping into the sea, but the

realization and bold affirmation of an undying phrase of the reality and permanence of the human ego in a profounder personality.'

To the critic and the layman the most interesting and absorbing phase of states of feelings, mystic or normal, is the relationship between experience and expression, because it is only through the medium of expression that he becomes aware of the phenomenon, and its peculiar qualities infringe upon his consciousness. Independent of values we associate with the sensible world, unanalysable and unapproachable by the mind, the mystic experience, as Iqbal suggests, remains incommunicable and ineffable in its pristine purity. Thus, perhaps, the most unalloyed manifestation of the mystic ecstasy should be a serene and speechless state of rapture and contemplation :

If the unheard, unspoken,
Word is unspoken, unheard ;
Still is the spoken word the Word unheard,
The Word without a word, the Word within
The World, and for the world ;
And the light shone in the darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled World still whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

But the obvious fact remains that the mystic is frequently trying to give verbal or other artistic form to his spiritual encounter. That such experiences are not uncommon is brought home to us because of this itch for self-expression in the mystic. There may be, on the other hand, many mystic states that do not find their way into verbal formulation, but

of necessity we can have no awareness of these, and they remain outside the pale of discussion.

Iqbal is perfectly right when he says that the mystic state is 'essentially a matter of inarticulate feelings, untouched by discursive intellect.' But feelings in sensitive creative persons have an invariable tendency towards objectification, through the medium of creative expression. That a good deal of the original fluidity, iridescence, and intensity are lost in the transition is inevitable, because words and other artistic media have values, meanings and suggestive qualities acquired in the ordinary acts of self-communication, and are not quite capable of carrying across the finer shades of beauty and poignancy in any very intense individual experience. There is a fixity about them at variance with the flexibility of emotive states. So most emotional experiences suffer a sea-change when they are expressed: the unique feeling is translated into current symbols, having something of the commonplace about them. This is obviously truer of the mystic experience than of others since the mutation is greater. It has first to be translated into terms of the sensible, and then into language or whatever other medium the mystic adopts. Iqbal speaks of a 'cognitive element in the mystic experience that lends itself to the form of idea.' From most instances of mystic self-expression it seems

intellectual formulation an alien medium, and almost invariably expresses himself in terms of concrete imagery. Feelings find greater relief in some sort of a metaphor than in abstractions; and the erotic tone of a good many mystic poems, the picturesque symbolism so frequently used, show that the mystic is more of a poet than a philosopher. That accounts for the mystic condemnation of intellect as an organ of knowledge, which seems unjustifiable to Iqbal. When the mystic tries to express his states in terms of ideas and concepts, he is generally vaguer, ambiguous and unconvincing. Perhaps Ibn-al-Arabi provides a good example. The vivid beauty and pointed precision of his *Fatuhat-al-Makkiy* is greatly diluted and made tenuous and tortuous in his *Fusus-ul-Hikam*. Iqbal himself is happier when he uses poetic symbols; which is perhaps also the reason why he considers the mystic consciousness as similar to normal consciousness because he is unconsciously translating his mystic experience into normal sensible terms.

The cognitive element comes in at a later stage, when the mystic has translated his raptures into symbols and a system of concrete imageries, and the mind has something solid to bite upon. The mystic orders with their minutely adjusted gradations of stages of spiritual development and their complex symbolical rituals are based upon the

analysis of the formal shape that the mystic experience takes when cast into the mould of the sensible. So mysticism as a highly organized esoteric philosophy, with its stages of initiation, deeper and deeper into the heart of the mystery, does not form an element of the actual experience itself,—it is a sort of commentary upon it. The mystic has after all the human weakness for rituals and system of thought as often and as not. Perhaps he also tries to lead others in his halting manner by gradually preparing them for it, to the inner shrine where he had himself beheld the ineffable vision. But it would be very wrong to take it all as anything but an aftermath.

As has been already suggested, Iqbal's temper is intellectual and philosophical, and so analysis and generalization form the predominant features of his works. His main ideal was the regeneration of humanity through the unremitting effort of the individual for complete self-realization. But the individual must know which way he is to go for this self-fulfilment and it is here that Iqbal finds the mystic way of life so satisfying. The only sure thread to guide out of the labyrinth of conflicting passions and ambitions, of the tortuous byways and alleys of the mind-built Utopias on to the highroad of life is love, or a sensitive, all-comprehending sympathy. Love always makes the surest bee-line for the desirable; and for the mystic the hub of

the universe is Love. 'The assimilation of an alien universe by a vital process,' so necessary for the development of Selfhood, is based upon that initiative understanding which is another form of love.

But if man finds himself, he has also to lose himself, in love. The law of life demands that by effort and by a finer organization of his inner self man should build up his unique individuality. However, it is merely the initial stage. The final aim of life is the building up of something impersonal, which is only possible through the individual's development of his ego. This central paradox of life is presented in a series of analysis in اسرار خودی رموز بیخودی and

It is necessary to understand all the ramifications of this fact of Iqbal's thought because it is only then that we shall be able to perceive clearly the underlying pattern, a surprisingly consistent one, in Iqbal's works. To him the joy of the journey is not in the arrival, but in the perpetual tramp, with always the possibility of a new adventure round the corner and the prospect of the unusual and exciting beyond the hill. Ceaseless effort and not repose is what gives zest to life, and so Iqbal prefers humanity in its imperfect state. There are so many surprising *possibilities* in the imperfect, you can always do something about it; and introduce in point varitism upon the single theme

of the improvement ; you cannot do anything with the perfect. There is something oddly thrilling and attractive about a humanity so gracelessly lost to the sense of its high destiny, that instead of it seeking God it is pursued by a questing God. In the mystic path, too, he is the acolyte, with a world of rich expectations in his soul, searching for perfection and ultimate place.

Even here, however, Iqbal has been profoundly influenced by the Islamic mystics. The natural corollary to man's communion with God is a state of spiritual readiness for it varying in degrees of intensity and receptivity. And so the mystics recognize grades of spiritual attainment and perfection, culminating ideal humanity—the perfect man (al Insan ul Ka'mil), a being very different from the superman of Wagner or Shaw.

The two Muslim mystics who have most elaborately developed this ideal are Ibn ul 'Arabi and Abdul Karim Ibrahim al-Jili. Iqbal has made a very brilliant and penetrating study of Jili's *Al Insan ul Ka'mil* in his *Development of Metaphysics in Persia* showing his bearings towards this aspect of esoteric philosophy. Iqbal's early works show very slight traces of this influence, which was to bear its most remarkable fruit much later in his poetic career.

Iqbal's *Javid Namah* is perhaps his most ambitious work. It is definitely the most complex

of his poems, both in the design and intricate pattern of thought used in it. It is lacking in the artistic beauty we find in some poems in *Piyam-i-Mashriq*; but it is a much more elaborate poem, and there is a unity in it which makes it much more compact than *Piyam-i-Mashriq*.

With its numerous *dramatis personæ* its esoteric symbolism and its complicated development of abstruse ideas the *Javid Namah* requires a whole long study to itself. For the purposes of this essay its most interesting features are the use of certain of Jili's symbols—the Heaven of the Moon, the Heaven of the Mercury, the Heaven of the Venus and so on; echoes of Rumi and Hallaj, and the profound influence of Al Insan ul Ka'mil. A comparative study along intensive lines of Jili's Al Insan ul Ka'mil and Iqbal's *Javid Namah* will be worth the trouble for a serious student of Iqbal.

IQBAL'S POLITICAL THEORY

IQBAL as a leading exponent of Islamic thought and institutions believed in a progressive spiritual universe and spiritual beings with their distinct individualities realising their destiny by mastering their environment under a universal structure founded on divine law and organisation—all organically related to one another.

Iqbal sets forth a philosophy of life regarding man's vision of himself, his God and the world that surrounds him. "The Quran," he says, "awakens in man the higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and the universe." The ultimate character of Reality is spiritual, and religion seeks a closer contact with reality. The ultimate Reality is a "rationally directed creative life," and an ego is a "rationally directed creative will." God is an Ultimate Ego and a unique Individual. The individuality of the Ultimate Ego is emphasised in the Quran by the name of Allah. The Islamic conception of God signifies many important elements such as "Creativeness, Knowledge, Omnipotence and Eternity."

Reality, according to Iqbal, is spirit, but there are degrees of spirit. The ultimate Reality

is the Ultimate Ego, from which egos proceed. "The creative energy of the Ultimate Ego, in whom deed and thought are identical, function as ego-unities. Every atom of Divine energy, however low in the scale of existence, is an ego. But there are degrees in the expression of egohood. Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of egohood until it reaches its perfection in man. That is why the Quran declares the Ultimate Ego to be nearer to man than his own neck-vein. Like pearls do we live and move and have our being in the perpetual flow of Divine life.¹

Thus, "from the unity of all-inclusive ego, who creates and sustains all egos follows the essential unity of mankind."²

(Vision and power both combined are essential to the spiritual expansion of humanity). Vision without power may bring moral elevation, but no lasting culture. (Similarly, power without vision results in destruction and tyranny. Without organization there is no progress, material or spiritual. The chief formative factor in the life-history of Mussalmans is the ethical ideal that Islam puts forth and a definite type of polity that it establishes,—the attainment of the former is the end, and the construction of the latter a means to that end. Thus, the ethical ideal represents vision

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 99 and 100.

² *Ibid.*, p. 129.

and the organisation of Islamic political system means power—a combination of which secures the spiritual growth of mankind. “The state, according to Islam, is only an effort to realise the spiritual in a human organisation.”¹ Philosophically speaking, Islamic Political Theory, as enunciated by Iqbal, is normative in its character. It is concerned with a specific ethical ideal—the raising of humanity to the highest well-being both materially and morally by means of an extensive commonwealth built up on the belief of one God, whose sovereignty is supreme.

Religion, as stated before, seeks a closer contact with the Ultimate Reality. Islam is not only a religion or a name for beliefs or certain forms of worship ; it is, in fact, a philosophy of life—a complete code for the guidance of the individual's entire life—from the cradle to the grave and from the grave to the yonder world. The Holy Quran lays down the broad principles of life ; the details came from the Prophet. Islam is, thus, all-embracing in its nature and affects all aspects of human activity—a transformation of the individual, *millat* and humanity. The essence of religion is faith, and the essential aim of religion is the “transformation and guidance of man's inner self and outer development.” The goal of life is the realisation and perfection of the individual

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 217.

self, which depends on the development of human faculties in the right direction. Guidance is necessary in every sphere of life and Islam provides the details of law—a complete code of creed and morals, a social order creative of a polity with every institution of an extensive commonwealth. “Islam,” says Iqbal, “is not a departmental affair, it is neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action ; it is an expression of the whole man.”¹

Islam is, thus, a harmonious blending of its various elements in a harmonious whole ; no one aspect can be isolated or considered without reference to the other. In Islam, state, *millat*, *imam*, individual and government cannot be treated of separately.² Again, the various aspects of a man’s life—social, religious, political and economic cannot be isolated. “In Islam it is the same reality which appears as church looked at from one point of view and state from another.” “Islam,” contends Iqbal, “is a single unanalysable reality, which

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 3.

² جلال پادشاہی ہو کہ جمہوری تماشا ہو
جدا ہو دیں سیاست سے تو رہ جاتی ہے چنگیزی

ہوئی دین و دولت میں جس دم جدائی
ہوس کی امیری ہوس کی وزیری
ہوئی ملک و دیں کیلئے نامرادی
ہوئی چشم تہذیب کی نابصیری

is one or the other as your point of view varies." "Thus, the Quran considers it necessary to unite religion and state, ethics and politics in a single revelation." "Islam, in short, represents a noble ideal of a harmonious whole."

In Islam, the Creator and the universe, spirit and matter, church and state are all organic to each other. A Musalman is not required to renounce the temporal world in the interests of a world of spirit. "Man is not the citizen of a profane world to be renounced in the interests of a world of spirit situated elsewhere. To Islam matter is spirit realising itself in space and time." Iqbal accepts the world of matter along with its limitations and establishes a relation between the world of matter and spirit. He says, "It is the mysterious touch of the ideal that animates and sustains the real, and through it alone we can discover and affirm the ideal. With Islam the ideal and the real are not two opposing forces which cannot be reconciled. The life of the ideal consists, not in a total breach with the real which would tend to

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 216.

² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

³ Iqbal, Presidential Address of the All-India Muslim League, Allahabad, 1930.

اسی قرآن میں ہے اب ترک جہاں کی تعلیم

جنس نے مومن کو بنایا مہ و پرویں کا امیر

shatter the organic wholeness of life into painful oppositions, but in the perpetual endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view eventually to absorb it, to convert it into itself and to illuminate its whole being,"¹ Islam, thus, rejects the old static view of the universe and reaches a dynamic view. The ethical ideal being the spiritual expansion of humanity, the Mussalman is directed to secure the highest well-being both materially and morally. Islam sets forth a standard of conduct—"enjoin right and forbid wrong."² Rightness or wrongness of conduct may be considered with reference to their tendency to good or evil. A conduct is right when it is according to rule, and a conduct is good when it is valuable or serviceable for some end. Islam is a creed of service and leads its followers to seek the welfare and finally perfection of humanity in a co-operative spirit.³ The end, in Islam is, thus, a perfection of humanity. And the goodness or badness of a Musalman's conduct consists in its serviceableness for this end. Similarly that conduct of the Mussalman is alone right when it is according to the law of the Quran. The *shari'at* will tell him what is right that is to be enjoined and what is wrong that is forbidden.

It is this ethical ideal of Islam, which

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 12.

² Qur'an, 22 : 6.

³ Qur'an, 5 : 17.

furnishes those basic emotions and loyalties, which may gradually unify scattered individuals and groups and finally transform them into a well-knit people called the *millat*, possessing a moral consciousness of their own. "As an emotional system of unification," says Iqbal, "Islam recognises the worth of the individual as such, and rejects blood-relationship as a basis of human unity." "All human life is spiritual in its origin. Such a conception is creative of fresh loyalties." When a number of individuals profess Islam, they adhere to its principles and acquire a passion for it; they are loyal to Islam, they are loyal to their brethren-in-Islam; they are loyal to their leader-in-Islam and firstly and lastly loyal to their Allah. These emotions and loyalties create a solidarity which is so essential to the development and organisation of a corporate life. This organised life is marked by the attainment of a moral consciousness on the part of every member and an incessant striving towards the realisation of the ideal.

Every organised life is marked by the existence of certain laws and institutions and Islam also provides for the same. Islamic life is lived according to Islamic laws and Islamic institutions, which in pursuance of the ethical ideal are essentially creative of social order and

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 205.

² *Ibid*, p. 205.

moral development. And this is the culture of Islam. Islam like other systems is not the name of a type of society, but is capable of transforming the life of individuals professing the faith into a well-ordered and well-organised community of moral and material well-being. The life of Islam, consequently, has a peculiar cultural force, and is distinguished by a complete organisation and a unity of will and purpose in the *millat*. "Muslim society, with its remarkable homogeneity and inner unity," says Iqbal, "has grown to be what it is, under the pressure of the laws and institutions associated with the culture of Islam."¹ The structure of Muslim society, in other words, is entirely due to the working of Islam as a culture inspired by the specific ethical ideal.

Islam believes in a universal polity—a politico-religious system or a social polity—based on fundamentals that were revealed to the Prophet. A rational interpretation of the principles of Islam began with the Prophet himself, whose constant prayer was: "God! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things." It was the Prophet's religious experience which created a distinct social order. It was again this social order that developed into a polity with implicit legal precepts. The structure and working of the Islamic state rested on an analysis and systematisation of

¹ Iqbal, Presidential Address of the All-India Muslim League, Allahabad, 1930.

these fundamentals into a body of rules called the *shari'at*. The religious ideal of Islam is, thus, organically related to the social order and the social order to the Islamic polity. Islam is not a church, but an organised life conceived as a contractual organism, long before Rousseau thought of it, and animated by an ethical ideal, which regards man as a spiritual being possessing rights and duties under a social mechanism.

To Iqbal, the true religion is Islam, the best organisation is the universal Islamic polity and structure, and the fittest leader of humanity is the Muslim *millat*.¹ Iqbal was, thus, inspired by a vision of a world-wide Islamic state of a unified Muslim *millat*, no longer divided by racial or territorial considerations. The *millat* is a free and solid Muslim brotherhood, with *Ka'ba* as its centre, knit together by the love of Allah and devotion to the Prophet. In the *Asrar-i-Khudi* (Secrets of the Self), Iqbal deals with the life of the individual Mussalman, and in the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (Mysteries of the Negation of the Self), he discusses the life of the Islamic *millat* and organisation.

The Mussalman and the *millat* require, in the first instance, a social order for their development and realisation. What is Iqbal's conception of the Islamic social order? It is a

matter of ordinary experience that the development of the individual self depends on the nature of the environing society and the ideology, which animates the entire social structure. Numerous factors, therefore, favour and stimulate the self-development of the individual—they are, in short, the natural and cultural forces that make up his being. Self-development presupposes a society. An ideal society can only be based on the principles of equality, social justice and human brotherhood. The social order of Islam as a world-unity is founded on the principle of *Tauhid* (Unity of God). Islam as a religion has been a living factor in the intellectual, emotional and progressive life of mankind. The ideal society according to Iqbal is one, which is in consonance with the Prophet's conception of Islam. Being inspired by the teachings of Islam, Iqbal neither disregarded the past nor disbelieved the organic change of human society. No people can afford to forget their past, which has made and retained their present identity. Iqbal preached the social values of Islam, and maintained that they form the best guide for the modern world. The social order of Islam is built up on the broadest humanitarian basis.

Iqbal enunciates the principles of Islam as an ideal society. The individual who loses his self in the *millat* reflects both the past and the future as in a mirror, so that he transcends mortality and enters into the life of Islam,

which is infinite and everlasting. In order to acquire a creative urge, the Musalman is directed to return to the Prophet¹—the particular life-centre—which is a source of the deepening of both the individual and collective consciousness. There is much difference between the prophetic and mystic types of consciousness. Iqbal wrote, "The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of 'unitary experience'; even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The Prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep with a view to control the forces of history and thereby to create fresh world of ideals."² At another place, Iqbal says, "Another way of judging the value of a Prophet's religious experience, therefore, would be to examine the type of manhood that he has created, and the cultural world that has sprung out of the spirit of his message."³

Iqbal has based his philosophy of life on his philosophy of the 'self.' The real cause of Muslim deterioration is *nafi-i-khudi*, the lack of

طرح عشق انداز اندر جان خویش¹
تازه کن با مصطفیٰ پیمان خویش

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 178.

² *Ibid*, p. 174.

self-cognisance,¹ and Iqbal suggests *isbat-i-khudi*, self-recognition, as its remedy. . ' *Khudi* ' is here used in a philosophical sense, and means recognition of one's self.² Man has a unique capacity to recognise his self and the purpose of his creation.³ This capacity makes him supreme over other creatures. The life of man should, therefore, begin with the study of his self and culminate in perfection of his self. *Khudi* is, thus, the name of several attributes found in an ideal character such as self-realisation, self-assertion, boldness, spirit of indepen-

¹ خودی کی موت سے مغرب کا اندروں بے نور
 خودی کی موت سے مشرق ہے مبتلائے جزام
 خودی کی موت سے روح عرب ہے بے تب و تاب
 بدن عراق و عجم کا ہے بے عروق و نظام
 خودی کی موت سے ہندی شکستہ بالوں پر
 قفسی ہوا ہے حلال اور آشیانہ حرام
 خودی کی موت سے پیر حرم ہوا متجبور
 کہ بیچ کھائے مسلمان کا جامۂ احرام
² خودی کیا ہے راز درون حیات
 خودی کیا ہے بیداری کا ثنات
 ازل اسکے پیچھے ابد سامنے
 نہ حد اسکے پیچھے نہ حد سامنے
³ خودی کو کر بلند اتنا کہ ہر تقدیر سے پہلے
 خدا بندے سے خود پوچھے بتا تیری رضا کیا ہے

dence, sense of respect, noble idealism and action. The object is spiritual elevation.

Iqbal did not believe in a universal life ; to him all life is individual in character. God Himself is an individual, but the most unique individual. The universe, as an organised association of 'individuals,' is in a state of organic growth. Man plays an important part in this process of evolution. The ethical and religious ideal of Islam is not self-negation, but self-affirmation. The individual attains to this ideal by becoming more and more individual or unique. The Prophet said, "Create in yourself the attributes of God." Thus, man has, as his ideal, the most unique Individual, whom he has to follow. The highest form of life is the *khudi* or Ego, in which the individual becomes a "self-contained exclusive centre," both physically and spiritually.¹ The individual draws closer and closer to God, until he is the completest person. Success lies in the struggle against all material forces, which hinder the progress of man. "The life of the Ego is a kind of tension caused by the Ego invading the environment and the environment invading the Ego."² The true person

۱ پیکر هستی ز آثار خودی است
 هر چه می بینی ز اسرار خودی است
 خویشتن را چون خودی بیدار کرد
 آشکارا عالم پندار کرد

² Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 143.

masters the environment and, consequently, absorbs God into his Ego. The Ego attains to freedom by removing all obstructions in its way by assimilating them. Life is, thus, a "forward assimilative movement." The Ego "reaches fuller freedom by appropriating the Individual who is most free—God." Life is, thus, an endeavour to be free. "And verily towards thy God is the limit," says the Quran.

The Ego or Person is the centre of life in man. Personality is a "state of tension"; the moment it ceases, relaxation follows. The development of the Ego is not possible without an ideal. Life is a ceaseless activity after the ideal—a perpetual desire.¹ 'Man' is a restless being engrossed in ceaseless pursuit of fresh scopes for self-expression and realisation.² He

۱ زندگی در جستجو پوشیدہ است
اصل او در آرزو پوشیدہ است
آرزو را در دل خود زندہ دار
تا نگردد مشیت خاک تو مزار
ما ز تخیلق مقاصد زندہ ایم
از شعاع آرزو تابندہ ایم

۲ خودی کی یہ ہے منزل اولیٰ
مسافرا یہ تیرا نشیمن نہیں
تری آگے اس خاکداں سے نہیں
جہان تاجہ سے ہے توجہاں سے نہیں
بڑھے جا یہ کوہ گراں توڑ کر
طلسم زمان و مکاں توڑ کر

is a "creative activity, an ascending spirit who, on his onward march rises from one state to another." The idea of personality sets forth a standard of value—a problem of good and evil. Accordingly, that which strengthens personality is good; that which weakens is bad. "The Ego is fortified by love," which means the desire to assimilate or absorb." Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them. Love individualises the lover as well as the beloved.¹ The effort to realise the most unique individuality individualises the seeker and implies the individuality of the sought, for nothing else would satisfy the nature of the seeker."

The Ego passes through three stages in its

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 15.

مرد خدا کا عمل عشق سے صاحب فروغ²
 عشق ہے اصل حیات موت ہے اسپر حرام
 نقطہ نورے کہ نام او خودی است
 زیر خاک ما شرار زندگی است
 از محبت می شود پائندہ تر
 زندہ تر سوزندہ تر تابندہ تر
 هست معشوقے نہان اندر دلت³
 چشم اگر داری بیا بنماشت
 عاشقان او ز خوبان خوب تر
 خوشتر و زیبا تر و محبوب تر

onward movement towards uniqueness—(1) obedience to the law,¹ (2) self-control, the highest form of self-consciousness or Egohood, and (3) Divine-Vicegerency. The Vicegerent of God is the completest Ego on earth. The goal of humanity is a combination of the highest power and the highest knowledge. The Vicegerent is, therefore, "the real ruler of mankind; his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth. Out of the richness of his nature he lavishes the wealth of his life on others, and brings them nearer and nearer to himself."² "For the present he is a mere ideal ; but the evolution of humanity is tending towards the production of an ideal race of more or less unique individuals, who will become his fitting parents. Thus, the kingdom of God on earth means the democracy of more or less unique individuals, presided over by most unique individual possible on this earth." Thus, aspiration and passionate idealism serve as dynamic forces, which streng-

1 عاشقی؟ محکم شو از تقلید یار

تا کمند تو شود یزدان شکار

در اطاعت کوش اے غفلت شعار

می شود از جبر پیدا اختیار

2 نائب حق در جہاں بودن خوشی است

بر عناصر حکمران بودن خوشی است

نائب حق ہماچو جان عالم است

ہستی او ظل اسم اعظم است

then the 'self.' But, if *khudi* is properly disciplined by obedience and self-control and rightly cultivated, it develops a personality worthy of representing God on earth. "It is the lot of man to share in the deeper aspiration of the universe around him and to shape his own destiny as well as that of the universe."¹

The philosophy of *khudi* has as its corollary the conception of *ba'ikhudi* (negation of the self). It means the losing of one's self in the community to serve a common end.² Individuals develop their *khudi* to such an extent that they submit to the *millat*, but remain animated with an intense love of action and freedom.³ Such individuals are a source of strength to the *millat*, and the *millat* exalts their position.⁴

Man is a social being, and can only live in the society of his fellow-men.⁵ The individual and the *millat* reflect each other; the individual

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 16.

واحدست و بر نمی تابد دوشی²
 من ز قاب او من استم و تو توشی
 فطرتش آزاد و هم زنجیری است³
 جزو او را قوت کل گیری است
 فرد را ربط جماعت رحمت است⁴
 جوهر او را کمال از منت است
 در جماعت فرد را بینیم ما⁵
 از چمن او را چو گل چینیم ما

is elevated through the *millat*, and the *millat* is organised through individuals.¹ An isolated individual is ignorant of his ideals and capabilities. The *millat* inspires him with a knowledge of his functions in life, and forces him to be free by enslaving him under an organised social structure.² It is on account of a craving for association that the individual forms the basic unit of the *millat*.³ Out of necessity, he is a member of the *millat*; he depends on the *millat* for his self-expression and realisation.⁴ As soon as the individual loses his 'self' in the *millat* he finds his personality an embodiment of past traditions and reflects both the past and the future as in a mirror.⁵

His individuality shines in the multiplicity of *millat*, and the diversity of the *millat*

¹ فرد می گیرد ز ملت احترام
 ملت از افراد می یابد نظام
² چون اسیر حلقه آئین شود
 آهوئے رم خوئے او مشکین شود
³ پختہ تر از گرمی صحبت شود
 تا بمعنی فرد هم ملت شود
⁴ در دلش ذوق نمو از ملت است
 احتساب کار او از ملت است
⁵ مایه دار سیرت دیرینه او
 رفته و آئنده را آئینہ او

acquires unity through his individuality.¹ Thus, the *millat*, which is composed of individual Musalmans, is required to achieve a real collective Ego to live, move and have its being as a single individual.² The institution of Prophethood unifies the *millat* and completes its formation under an organised system of law and order.³

The Islamic *millat* is based on the fundamental principles of the Unity of God and the finality of the Prophet.⁴ The principle of

¹ وحدت او مستقیم از کثرت است
کثرت اندر وحدت او وحدت است

² "Hold fast to yourself ; no one who erreth can hurt you, provided you are well-guided." Qur'an 4 : 11.

³ تا خدا صاحب دل پیدا کند
کوز حرفے دفترے املا کند
ساز پروازے کہ از آوازے
خاک را بخشد حیات تازه
ذره بے مایہ ضو گیرد از او
هر متاعے ارج نو گیرد از او
دیدہ او می کشد لب جاں دمد
تا روئی میرد یکے پیدا شود
⁴ تا سوئے یک مدعایش می کشد
حلقہ آئینی پیاثنی می کشد
نکتہ توحید بار آموزدش
رسم و آئین نیاز آموزدش

Tauhid demands loyalty to God. God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life; loyalty to God, therefore, amounts to man's loyalty to his own ideal nature. All human life is spiritual in its origin. Psychologically, the principle of *Tauhid* seeks to restore an integral unity to the distracted and torn world. It brings a new sense of courage and frees the outlook of man from fear and superstitions.¹ Despair, fear and diffident mentality are the worst tendencies in man and destroy noble life.² The remedy lies in an implicit faith in Allah and submission to His will.³ Iqbal, thus, advocates a ceaseless struggle in the pursuit of the ideal,⁴ which constitutes real life. It is the principle of *Tauhid* that unifies the diverse elements and groups comprising the

۱ بيم و شك ميرو عمل گيرد حيات
 چشم مي بيند ضمير كائنات
 ۲ نه هو نوميد - نوميدى زوال علم و عرفاى ه
 اُميد مرد مومن ه خدا ك راز دارونمى
 ۳ از رضا مسلم مثال كوكب است
 در ره هستى تبسم بر لب است
 گر خدا دارى ز غم آزاد شو
 از خيال بيشى و كم آزاد شو
 ۴ مرگ را سامان ز قطع آرزو است
 زندگانى محكم از لاتقنطو است

Islamic *millat*.¹ The doctrine of *Tauhid* carries with it a principle of action and forms the basis of the advancement of humanity. It is not only the conviction of the truth but the acceptance of a proposition as a basis of action. "Those who believe and do good," means that no belief is acceptable unless it is carried into practice by performing duties to Allah.²

Allah is the real owner of sovereignty. The sovereignty of Allah extends to the entire universe, the whole humanity, and all organization. Allah is the real source of religion, philosophy and law, and bestower of power, strength and authority.³ "Say: O God! Owner of Sovereignty, Thou givest power unto whom Thou wilt and Thou withdrawest power from whom Thou pleasest.⁴ The Muslim *millat* being extraordinarily God-conscious is permeated by a religious control, which extends to every sphere

ملت بیضا تن و حار لاله
 ساز ما را پرده گردان لاله
 لاله سرمایه اسرار ما
 رشته اش شیرازه افکار ما
 تا ز اسرار تو بنماید ترا
 امتحانشی از عمل باید ترا
 دیدی ازو حکمت ازو آئینی ازو
 زور ازو قوت ازو تمکین ازو

⁴ Qur'an, 3: 8.

of its conduct.¹

The extraordinary and remarkable personality of Prophet Mahammad provides a connecting link between the various loyalties characteristic of the fundamental polity of Islam. It is this concentration of loyalties that transforms the Musalmans into a well-defined unified *millat*,² representing a message of hope for humanity.³ The Prophet is the guide and unifier of the Muslim *millat*. The *millat* owes its being to him,⁴ and through him the Musalmans are one and possess oneness of purpose.⁵ The *millat* is a unified association of individual Musalmans, animated by a strong desire for

¹ ملت ما را اساس ديگر است

اين اساسي اندر دل ما مضمر است

² از رسالت در جهان تکوين ما

از رسالت دين ما آئين ما

از رسالت صد هزار ما يك است

جزو ما از جزو ما لاينفك است

³ ما ز حكم نسبت او ملتيم

اهل عالم را پيام رحمتيم

⁴ زندگي قوم از دم او يافت است

اين سحر از آفتابش تافت است

⁵ از رسالت هم نوا گشتيم ما

هم نفس هم مدعا گشتيم ما

unity.¹ The unity of the *millat* is the outcome of the religion of humanity, which was revealed to the Prophet.² So long as the *millat* retains this unity of will and purpose, its life is secure and lasting.³

The Prophet of Islam is the last, and his *ummat* is the best people and leaders of the rest. Allah completed the Faith for the Musalmans, and sent His last message through the Prophet of Islam.⁴ There will be no

¹ کثرت ہم مدعا وحدت شود

پاخته چوں وحدت شود ملت شود

² زنده هر کثرت ز بند وحدت است

وحدت مسلم ز دین فطرت است

دین فطرت از نبی آموختیم

در ره حق مشعل افروختیم

³ تا نه این وحدت ز دست ما رود

هستی ما با ابد همدم شود

هم زنده فقط وحدت افکار سے ملت

وحدت هو فنا جس سے وہ الہام بری الہام

‘This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.’ Qur'an, 5 : 3.

پس خدا بر ما شریعت ختم کرد

بر رسول ما رسالت ختم کرد

رونق از ما محفل ایام را

او رسل را ختم و ما اقوام را

Prophet after Muhammad, and no *ummat* after the Musalmans.¹ The Muslim *millat* is charged with the duty of perfecting the world order and the raising of humanity to a higher, nobler and spiritual state of life.² Thus, there is no *Sultanate* or *Badshahat* in Islam.³

The object of the Prophethood of Muhammad is to establish the fundamental unity of mankind on the basis of equality, liberty and fraternity. It was a message of human equality in social status and legal rights. God sent many messengers and prophets to reform the corrupt condition of the world. It has been the mission of every messenger to establish an ethical ideal and a system of life, having its

¹ لا نبی بعدی ز احسان خدا است
 پرده ناموس دیں مضطعی است
 دل ز غیر الله مسلمان بر کند
 نعره لا قوم بعدی می زند
² خدمت ساقی گری با ما گزاشت
 داد ما را آخرین جامے کہ داشت
 سروری در دین ما خدمت گری است
 عدل فاروقی و فقر حیدری است
 در قبائے خسروی درویشی زی
 دیده بیدار و خود اندیشی زی
³ خریدی نہ ہم جس کو اپنے لہو سے
 مسلمان کو ہے ننگ وہ پادشاہی

basis in the sovereignty of God. The original doctrine was soon mixed up with polytheism ; and the origin of all mischief was to impose the Godhood of man over man.¹ Slavery was in vogue, which debased the nature of man.² Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, being the last Messenger, came with the final message to free humanity of the Godhood of man." He (God) is your *Rabb* (benefactor) and your *Ilah* (Overlord), who is the Creator of you and the universe. Do not recognise any one as your Lord except Him," thus preached the Prophet of Islam. Slaves were freed, social equality was enforced and a world-conquering *ummat* came into being.³ The Prophet taught the

¹ بود انسان در جهان انسان پرست
 ناکسی و نابود مند و زیر دست
 سطوت کسری و قیصر رهزنی
 بند ها در دست و پا و گردنی
² کاهن و پا پا و سلطان و امیر
 بهر یک نختاپیر صد نختاپیر گیر
³ از غلامی فطرت او دوز شده
 نغمه ها اندر نه او خون شده
 تا امین حق به حقداران سپرد
 بندگان را مسند خاقان سپرد
 تازه جان اندر تن آدم دید
 بنده را باز از خداوندان خرید
 نقش نو بر صفحه هستی کشید
 امتی گیتی کشائی آفرید

world lessons in equality, liberty¹ and fraternity long before the architects of the French Revolution repeated these words. Every Musalman is a trustee of the *millat*, and the bond of love is the source of liberty for all.² The unshakable faith in the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad binds all the Musalmans together, and this is the true Islamic spirit of a practical brotherhood. The fundamental unity of mankind becomes possible and real, if the conception of Islamic fraternity is revived and enforced.

The Islamic *millat* being based on the principles of the unity of God and the finality of the Prophet, is not confined to territorial limits. Nationalism is foreign to Muslim polity; to a Musalman the entire world is his abode and place of worship, for it lies within the

۱ امتی از ماسوا بیگانه
 بر چراغ مصطفی پروانه
 کل مومن اخوة اندر دلش
 حریت سرمایہ آب و گلش
 ناشکیب امتیازات آمده
 در نهاد او مساوات آمده
 ۲ هر یک از ما امین ملت است
 صلاح و کینش صلاح و کین ملت است
 عشق را آرام جان حریت است
 ناله اش را ساربان حریت است

sovereignty of his Allah.¹ As opposed to the idea of nationalism based on the accident of geographical situation, race, colour and language,² Islam seeks to base the community of mankind on the belief in one God and, consequently, on the belief of human brotherhood and fraternity. The universal spirit of Islam means submission to the will of God and peace with all fellow-men. A Musalman believes in one Supreme God and His Prophet and, consequently, in the universal idea of Islamic fraternity, and cannot, thus, confine himself to a particular locality or geographical area.³

۱ تا ز بخششہائے آں سلطان دیں
مسجد ما شد ہمہ روئے زمین
فکر انسان بت پرستے بت گرے
ہر زماں در جستجوئے پیکرے
۲ باز طرح آزری انداخت است
تازہ تر پروردگارے ساخت است
کاید از خون ریختن اندر طرب
نام او رنگ است وہم ملک و نسب
ان تازہ خداؤں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے
جو پیرہن اسکا ہے وہ مذہب کا کفن ہے
۳ جوہر ما با مقامے بستہ نیست
بادۂ تندش باجامے بستہ نیست
ہندی و چینی سفال جام ماست
رومی و شامی و گل اندام ماست
قلب ما از ہند و روم و شام نیست
مرزبوم او باجز اسلام نیست

Prophet's own departure from his home-land solved the riddle and the Islamic *millat* was put on a world-wide basis.¹ It is, however, surprising that Iqbal characterised Jamal-ud-Din Afghani as "a living link between the past and the future of Musalmans,"² and spoke so highly about a person, who infused the spirit of nationalism in every Muslim country, thus striking a blow to the idea of universal *khilafat*.

Islam as a world system is a living force, and frees the outlook of man from racial, geographical and materialistic conceptions. On the political side, Islam definitely rejects the claims of racial and geographical factors to order the loyalties of the Musalmans.³ No territorial

۱ عقدہ قومیت مسلم کشور
از وطن آقائے ما هجرت نمود
حکمتش یک ملت گیتی نورد
بر اساس کلمه تعمیر کرد
هجرت آئین حیات مسلم است
این ز اسباب ثبات مسلم است
ہے ترک وطن سنت محبوب الہی
بے توبہ نبوت کی صداقت پہ گواہی

² Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 136.

۳ نے افغانیم و نے ترک قتارم
چمن زادیم و از یک شاخسارم
تمیز رنگ و بو بر ما حرام است
کہ ما پروردہ یک شاخسارم

nationalism or aggressive patriotism is allowed in Islam. Such a notion disrupts the essential unity of mankind¹ and narrows down the cosmopolitan outlook of Islam. The national idea produces a materialistic outlook of life and racial and territorial consciousness counteracts the humanizing spirit of mankind.² The *millat* is, thus, defined not by economic, linguistic or psychological values but by spiritual traditions and inner consciousness, derived from the

۱ آں چنان قطع اخوت کرده اند
 بر وطن تعمیر ملت کرده اند
 تا وطن را شمع محفل ساختند
 نوع انسان را قبائل ساختند
 مردمی اندر جہاں افسانہ شد
 آدمی از آدمی بیگانہ شد
 روح از تن رفت و ہفت اندام ماند
 آدمیت گم شد و اقوام ماند

۲ اقوام جہان میں ہے رقابت تو اسی سے
 تسخیر ہے مقصود تجارت تو اسی سے
 خالی ہے صداقت سے سیاست تو اسی سے
 کمزور کا گھر ہوتا ہے غارت تو اسی سے
 اقوام میں مخلوق خدا بٹتی ہے اسی سے
 قومیت اسلام کی جڑ کٹتی ہے اسی سے

immutable laws of revealed religion.¹ The Islamic *millat* is further predestined and has no time-limit.² The *millat* has a peculiar vitality and permanence of its own, and is perfected through the worship of, and submission to, Allah.³

The organization of a *millat* rests on law, and the law of the Islamic *millat* is the Quran.⁴

۱ صورت ماہی بہ بحر آباد شو
یعنی از قید مقام آباد شو
ہو قید مقامی تو نتیجہ ہے تباہی
رہ بحر میں آزاد وطن صورت ماہی
گفتار سیاست میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے
ارشاد نبوت میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے
۲ گرچہ ملت ہم ہمیرد مثل فرد
از اجل فرمان پذیر و مثل فرد
از اجل این قوم بے پرواستی
استوار از نکلن نرلناستے
۳ درجہاں بانگ ازاں بودست و ہست
ملت اسلامیان بودست و ہست
امتے در حق پرستی کاملے
امتے محبوب ہر صاحب دلے
۴ تو ہی دانی کہ آئین تو چیست؟
زیر گردوں سر تمکین تو چیست؟
آں کتاب زندہ قرآن حکیم
حکمت او لایزال است و قدیم

The Islamic *millat* is to be organised according to its own distinct law.¹ Allah is not only the Creator and an object of worship, but is also the law-giver. The law of the Qur'an manifests the will of Allah. The *shariat*,² the path of virtue or the divine code of ethical and social laws is supreme, and politically, the individual and the Amir, being members of the Islamic *millat* and subject to the same law, were never regarded immune or absolute.³ Thus, the supremacy of the divine law is one of the fundamental tenets of Islamic polity.⁴ The rule, therefore, is that the *millat* is deprived of legislative powers. The liberty of the individual is ensured through the divine law.⁵ The *millat* is

- ۱ ملت از آئین حق نبرد نظام
 از نظام مستحکم خیزد دوام
 ۲ علم حق غیر از شریعت هیچ نیست
 اصل سنت جز محبت هیچ نیست
 ۳ مگر تو می خواهی مسلمان زیستن
 نیست ممکن جز بقرآن زیستن
 ۴ مصلحت وقت می هم کسی که عمل کا معیار
 کون هم تارک آئین رسول مختار
 ۵ هستی مسلم ز آئین است و بس
 باطن دین نبی ایی است و بس
 از یک آئینی مسلمان زنده است
 پیکر ملت ز قرآن زنده است

to submit to the Apostle, for he proclaimed and interpreted the divine commandments as His messenger.¹ All Muslims have equal status and enjoy equal rights in the body-politic. This sort of civil liberty and the theory of equal opportunities dependent on it is the peculiar feature of Islamic politics. It is clear from the above that the Islamic system of government is not the democracy of the Western type, where a law may be enforced, changed or modified at the sweet will of the majority.²

Every Musalman believes in the supremacy of Islam. Islam does not suppress the human soul and the development of its latent potentialities, but merely lays down limits to its activity. These limits are known as the *shariat-i-Islamia* or the Divine law of Islam. The 'self', when subordinated to Divine law turns Islamic. The self in a modern conception is not bridled by any law except the law of

۱ هست دین مصطفیٰ دین حیات
 شرع او تفسیر آئین حیات
 فرد را شرع است مرقات یقیی
 پختہ تر از وے مقامات یقیی
 ۲ جمہوریت اک طرز حکومت ہے کہ جسمی
 بندوں کو گنا کرتے ہیں تو لا نہیں کرتے
 گریز از طرز جمہوری غلامے پختہ کارے شو
 کہ از مغز دو صد خر فکر انسانے نمی آید

force, but 'self' in Islam is subject to the laws and ethics of Islam. So long as the 'ego' of nations is not subordinated to the Divine law, world-peace remains an unrealised dream. The working of the present League of Nations amply proves it.'

Iqbal also discusses the doctrine of *Ijtihad*, thus maintaining a correct balance between the categories of permanence and change. "The ultimate spiritual basis of all life as conceived by Islam," says Iqbal, "is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. A society based on such a conception of reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change. It must possess eternal principles to regulate its collective life; for the eternal gives us a foothold in the world of perpetual change." "The teaching of the Qur'an that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation guided, but unhampered, by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own

۱۔ وہی ساز کہن مغرب کا جمہوری نظام
جس کے پردوں میں نہیں غیر از نوائے قیصری
برقصد تا روش رزم دریں بزم کہن
ردمندان جہان طرح نو انداختہ اند
من از این بیش ندانم کہ کفن دزدے چند
بہر تقسیم قبور انجمنے ساختہ اند

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 207.

problems." This implies the right of *Ijtihad*—independent judgment and interpretation of law in the light of changed and changing circumstances, which Iqbal holds essential to the healthy development of the body-politic. "The closing of the door of *Ijtihad*," contends Iqbal, "is pure fiction."

The characteristic virtue of the *millat* is attained by adopting the manner and way of living as practised by the Prophet.¹ Muslim temperament should, therefore, be all-affection and the words and deeds of a Musalman are to be an example to be followed by others.² One, who deviates from this path is not to be counted as a genuine member of the *millat*.³ True organisation is based on holding fast to the ideal of the *millat*, which is the preservation and propagation of the principle of the Unity of

¹ غنچه از شاخسار مصطفیٰ ...
 گل شو از باد بهار مصطفیٰ
 از بهارش رنگ و بو باید گرفت
 بهره از خلق او باید گرفت
² فطرت مسلم سراپا شفقت است
 در جهان دست و زبانش رحمت است
³ وز مقام او اگر دور ایستی
 از میان معشر ما نیستی
 چون حیات از مقصد ماکرم شود
 ضابط اسباب این عالم شود

God.¹ Islam believes in an active utilisation of the forces of nature, and thereby to gain an effective control over its material environment.² In order to fulfil the material needs of the *millat*, the development and proper use of science is essential.³ Thus, the socio-political order of Islam is keenly alive and responsive to the fact of change. Iqbal realises that life is a perpetual change or motion, and advocates a ceaseless struggle in the pursuit of the Islamic ideal. The Islamic *millat* is required to possess a real collective ego to live, move and have its being as a single individual. The development

¹ زانکه در تکبیر راز بود تست
حفظ و نشر لاله مقصود تست
² هرکه محسوسات را تسخیر کرد
عالمی از ذره تعمیر کرد
کوه و صحرا دشت و دریا بحر و بر
تختش تعلیم ارباب نظر
اے که از تاثیر افیون خفته
عالم اسباب را زون گفته
خیز و واکن دیده مخمور را
زون متخوار این عالم مجبور را
³ غایتش توسیع ذات مسلم است
امتحان ممکنات مسلم است
تا ز تسخیر قوائی این نظام
ذو ففونیائش نو گردد تمام

of such a consciousness depends on the preservation of the History¹ and traditions of the *millat*.² The centre of the Islamic *millat* is *Kaba*.³

Iqbal was not an advocate of war, and no Musalman acquainted with his faith can be a supporter of war as such. According to the dictates of the Qur'an, there are only two grounds for waging war (*jihad*), in the first place, in self-defence and in the second place, for the

¹ چيست تاريخ اے ز خود بيگانه
 داستانے قصہ افسانہ
 ایں ترا از خوبشتن آگاه کند
 آشنائے کار و مرد ره کند
 سرزند از ماضی تو حال تو
 خیزد از حال تو استقبال تو
² ربط ایام است ما را پیرهن
 سوزنشی حفظ روایات کہن
 ضبط کن تاریخ را پائندہ شو
 از نفسہائے رمیدہ زندہ شو
 مشکن از خواہی حیات لازوال
 رشتہ ماضی ز استقبال و حال
³ قوم را ربط و نظام از مرکزے
 روزگارش را دوام از مرکزے
 رازدار و راز ما بیت الکرام
 سوز ما ساز ہم ما بیت الکرام

establishment of conditions of universal peace or to enforce the regime of law in human society. When Muslims are tyrannised over and driven out of their homes, they are *permitted* to appeal to arms. War may also be waged for "Collective Security." In no other circumstance, war is obligatory. War for "appeasement of land-lorner" is unlawful in Islam.

According to Iqbal, "the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organisation as on the worth and power of individual man. In an over-organised society, the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He places the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul." The only effective factor, in the work of Iqbal, is the rearing of self-concentrated individuals. "Islam is neither rationalism nor imperialism but a league of nations, which recognises artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members."¹ Among the Muslim nations of today, Iqbal praises Turkey, which "alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber and attained to self-consciousness."² Iqbal thus, appeals to every Muslim nation "to sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics."³ The re-

¹ Iqbal, *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 212.

² *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 225, 226.

publican form of government is thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam and is an absolute necessity. Muslim legislative assembly is the only possible and legal form that *Ijma* can take in modern time.

So far as Indian politics is concerned, Iqbal's idea of *Pakistan* aimed at a complete possession of a belt of India to the Musalmans, and then to join it with neighbouring Islamic countries under a common name. Those, who hesitate to accept the Muslim ideology, may remember the words of Iqbal, who said about himself, "I love the communal group, which is the source of my life and behaviour; and which has formed me, what I am by giving me its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture, and thereby recreating its whole past, as a living operative factor, in my present consciousness."¹ Iqbal solemnly prayed to Allah to grant him a partisan,² who may carry on the reform movement started by him. And I believe Allah listened to his prayer. Iqbal is the mind and Jinnah is the heart of Muslim India.

شب گریزاں ہوگی آخر جلوہ خورشید سے
یہ چمن معمور ہوگا نغمۂ توحید سے

¹ Iqbal, *The Presidential Address of the All-India Muslim League*, Allahabad, 1930.

ایں امانت باز گیر از سینہ ام
خار جوهر برکشی از آئینہ ام
با مرا یک ہمدم دیرینہ دہ
عشق عالم سوز را آئینہ دہ

IQBAL'S CONCEPTION OF ART

AN artist may not know anything about the nature of art. The process of creation is often incomprehensible to the artist. He creates, and he creates in a particular manner, but very often he cannot explain why he works in a certain way and no other. He knows he is right; he feels it in his bones that a thing should be just so, that the least alteration would spoil it, but for the life of him he cannot give any clear and convincing reasons—reasons which would be obvious to a critic. Not that the creative faculty is apart and distinct from the critical one. The two faculties are inseparable and often indistinguishable. But in most artists, the critical faculty acts subconsciously. It is there, disciplining their creative power, turning it into right channels, but the artists are not aware of it and of the part it plays in creation. The idea of an artist about art, therefore, may not be more valuable than the idea of a layman. He may be at fault as much as any other person, may express ideas that are vague, limited, or even entirely wrong. It is an incontrovertible fact that the majority of the artists do not bother to think about art, or if they do, they generally

keep their ideas to themselves and do not give expression to them. And even when, sometimes, they do express their thoughts on the subject, it is in the form of a few isolated sentences, some disjointed pieces of observation which may or may not be acute, penetrating and valuable. They are so much preoccupied with the work of creation, it takes so much out of them that they have neither the desire nor the energy to turn their minds wholly to criticism ; they cannot give their best to this work which can be done more or less satisfactorily by those who possess second-rate minds, those who are lacking in creative faculty. But when the mind that creates turns also to the business of criticism, great criticism results. Creation and criticism are not two distinct faculties ; they are rather two different facets of the same reality. And if things were as they should be, the greatest creator would also be the greatest critic. But things being what they are, the average artist often is not an averagely good critic.

Even when an artist is most definitely not a critic, we cannot help being interested in any critical ideas that he may express. As a matter of fact, we are interested not only in his critical ideas but also in everything that concerns him. Such is human nature. We do not confine ourselves to the particular work of art, to the understanding and appreciation of its significance and its beauty ; but we want to find out

all about him, things that are wholly irrelevant. "I have observed," says Addison, "that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure, till he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author." We are interested in the colour of his hair and the shape of his nose ; we are anxious to know the kind of dress that he wears and the number of children that he has. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that we are also curious to know his ideas about various subjects, and more particularly about art. What he says about the nature of art, about its importance and its place in the scheme of things, is bound to be interesting, even when it is not illuminating. He may throw some light upon the processes involved, the difficulties faced and overcome, in creating a work of art. He may, at least, tell us something about his own creations, about the value, the significance that they have for him.

Theoretically, an artist is best qualified to speak about art. In practice, however, this maxim does not work out at all satisfactorily. There are various obstacles that stand in the artist's way, that make it difficult for him to arrive at the truth. One of these obstacles is his philosophy—if, of course, he happens to possess one. His particular philosophy gives a

peculiar bias to his thoughts ; it colours his vision ; it makes him see everything in the light of his personal beliefs and attitudes. An artist is not a philosopher. It is not necessary for him to have a well-defined philosophy. He merely communicates his personal and profound experiences—experiences which are valuable and unique. He describes what he sees at a particular moment—things that possess a rare beauty only to change instantly. He can, however, present, a philosophy as well. And this philosophy that he presents, can help him in various ways. It can give coherence and harmony to his artistic creations ; it can link them into one common and complex whole. It can make his style individual and powerful. More frequently, however, the artist's philosophy is something of a hindrance. He accepts those facts that fit into the system of his thought and rejects those that run counter to it. He selects certain things and rejects certain others, instead of developing a broader vision that embraces everything. His mind becomes like a little clearing in the middle of a forest. In that clearing every object stands out in sharp relief, clear and distinct. There is a harmonious arrangement, a more or less complex pattern, every detail occupying its destined place in the general scheme. But he is unaware of the multitudinous things that dwell in the forest. Further, he makes his art subservient to his philosophy.

Art becomes a means to an end ; it is used as a vehicle through which his philosophy finds its expression. And what is worse, he interprets art, its nature, its proper functions, its place in life, to suit the requirements of his philosophy.

Iqbal's conception of art is inseparably connected with his philosophy. Before discussing this conception, it is necessary to summarise Iqbal's critical observations in a more or less systematic manner. He has something to assert and he believes that every artist as well must have something to assert. He who has nothing to assert can create nothing. At best, he can follow the popular taste ; all that he can do is to give us a number of pale, worthless imitations. Art and creation, then, are synonymous terms. And all art is subjective. Beauty that an artist seeks is not an objective reality. It has no existence independent of him. Beauty exists only in the soul of the artist :

O William I we receive but what we give
And in our life alone doth Nature live.

The artist who surrenders himself to Nature signs his own death warrant. He can only present Nature imperfectly and his presentations of Nature are cold and lifeless. The true artist, on the contrary, extends the boundary of Nature. To the already rich and precious store of Nature, he makes richer and still more precious additions. His creations are better, more beautiful, more perfect than Nature's. In short, he creates a new and a more wonder-

ful world and this new and wonderful world that he creates, emerges out of his living and life-giving soul—a soul that is eternal and illimitable. Beauty and ugliness, good and evil, he sees and mirrors them perfectly. He is at once creator and destroyer. All old, useless, ugly things are destroyed and a new, a better and a more beautiful world rises Phoenix-like out of their ashes.

Art, true art, cannot flourish where there is no liberty. The soul of an artist cannot dwell in the body of a slave. Slavery, as it were, extinguishes the spark of life—the soul, that is. A slave loses his inventive faculty; he is deprived of his creative power. He becomes an imitator. Novelty, freshness and invention, he hates like poison. He studiously follows the beaten track. No vital, exalting and exalted art, therefore, can exist in a nation of slaves. Their art, inevitably, breathes of slavery which is another name for death. Their music is without the fire of life. Instead of strength, energy, power, it brings weakness and despair. "Joy in the widest commonalty spread" is banished for ever; sorrow and utter hopelessness are spread far and wide. His message is not life but death. As with music so with painting. The painter as well can neither create, nor can he destroy. He, like the musician, stands not for life but for death.

Art should be proud and swift like the flood—a flood that cleanses and purifies, giving

us a new life, a broader vision. It is a fine frenzy, a fire fed with the precious life-blood of the artist. All art has significance. It is this significance which is responsible for the resulting power, which makes the form vibrate with life. Look at the Taj, shining like a pearl in the soft brilliance of the moon, says Iqbal, and you will know the secret of art, of art that matters. Here you will find revealed the secret of love—a love, pure, fragrant and ever-singing. Here you will find love that can apprehend and appreciate beauty, that at once hides and reveals it—a love that is not subject to the limitations of time and space. It is love that exalts our feelings, that gives value to the valueless. Without love, life becomes a 'vale of tears,' a thing at once ugly and unstable. It is love that transforms ugliness into beauty, that spreads sweetness and light. It is love that fires our imagination and creates things of beauty. Love is all that we need. Nothing else matters.

Iqbal is very fond of contrasting love with wisdom, philosophy with art (or poetry): Love carries us straight to our goal; wisdom loses itself in a labyrinth. Philosophy is truth, cold truth, devoid of the secret flame; when this secret flame burns brightly in the heart, the result is poetry. Wisdom that sets the world aflame owes its kindling power to love. Love enriches our life with manifold beautiful feelings. Wisdom can find the eternal in the

transient ; it can enfold the whole universe. But it cannot give us complete satisfaction. It is love and love alone that can bring peace to the heart. It is the foolishness of men that makes them follow wisdom instead of love. You cannot search for the sun with a candle. Wisdom comes from Satan ; love springs from man.

Being a poet, Iqbal naturally speaks at greater length of the art with which he is most familiar—namely poetry. In Persian and Urdu, he frequently returns to this theme. Poetry, its nature and importance, the characteristics that go into the making of the poet, the duties and responsibilities of the poet, these topics he takes up again and yet again. There is consequently a good deal of repetition—and this repetition is not difficult to understand. The ideas that he expresses are frequently in his mind and to him they appear important. And frequently he turns them over in his mind and gives utterance to them with slight variations. The ideas thus repeatedly expressed are not very original but they are interesting nevertheless. The poet suffers, as it were, from a divine discontent and the expression of this divine discontent, this hankering after something unattainable, this burning desire that consumes him is poetry. The soul of the poet is ever restless, eager and aspiring. It knows no content. Nothing, no matter how beautiful it may be, can satisfy the poet completely. He

is always seeking, seeking something that cannot be attained. And it is just as well. For achievement means death ; it spells the end of the soul and its *raison d'être*. Give it Utopia and the soul would die. There would be nothing left to live for. The impulse towards perfection, the inner urge, the fire that keeps burning within, would be extinguished. It is just as well, therefore, that the goal remains always distant, the prize always unattainable. It is not the goal that matters but the journey—the journey that knows no end. The poet's desire is insatiable. It is

The desire of the moth for the star
Of the night for the morrow
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

Give him a beautiful flower and he will yearn after a flower more beautiful still. Give him the star that he so passionately desires and nothing less than "the Heaven's embroidered cloth" will satisfy him. He craves for the infinite and nothing finite can give him more than a temporary satisfaction.

This world with all that is beautiful, glorious, wonderful and precious in it, matters little to the poet. With the magic of his words, he can create a world more glorious, infinitely more precious. He is a lover of beauty and he can create beauty. He can transmute the commonplace into something rich and strange and wonderful ; he can turn,

with the mere wave of a hand, ugliness into beauty. Every sight and sound in Nature is invested by him with "a glory, a light that never was on sea or land." He is not of the earth, earthy. He is "like some hill that to the stars uncrowns its majesty." But he has also a message for those that dwell on the plains below—a message of life everlasting.

To know a poet fully is, however, not possible. The impression that we have of him is that of a burning spirit, burning with an unquenchable desire. And it is this flaming desire that finds its expression in poetry. But words are after all of little moment compared with what they are called upon to express. They are too uncertain, too limited, too imperfect to reveal fully the immensity of the soul. Words cannot do full justice to the fine, delicate, complex pattern of our feelings. They, as it were, draw a veil over them. What the poet says, therefore, is but an imperfect reflection of what he feels.

The poet, in spite of the distinguishing qualities that he possesses, qualities that lift him far above the common level, is nevertheless "a man speaking to men." He may dwell apart but at the same time he cannot remain completely aloof from humanity. He should not glide like a sunbeam by the blasted pine, he should not sit like a star upon the sparkling spire. He definitely must come down to valley and speak to those who dwell in that valley.

He is a unit, perhaps the most precious unit, of the complex whole which is humanity. The poet with his ceaseless quest, his ever-burning desire, is like the heart which, with its constant, rhythmic beats, keeps us alive. A nation, without poets, is as good as dead. Poetry is creation, creation of men, men who are not merely content to exist, men who are vitally alive and whose pulses beat with the rhythmic life of the universe. The poet who can create such men is one with the prophets.

There are, however, poets and poets. Not all who bear or usurp that name are worthy of it. They do not possess the right characteristics ; they do not discharge the duties that a poet must discharge. The nation that is in chains, the nation that is dead is full of pseudo-poets who forge newer and stronger chains, who are ever ready to extinguish the least spark of life that may appear. These pseudo-poets, themselves, are naturally not aware of the secret of life. To them evil is good ; loss, profit ; and the ugly, beautiful. At their touch, flowers lose their fragrance ; at their approach, the nightingale forgets its song. His gift is an anodyne which makes us forget the struggles and strife of life, a drug which saps what little energy we still possess and which sends us to the Land of the Lotus-eaters. He joins in their song :

Death is the end of life ; ah why
Should life all labour be ?

Let us alone, what pleasure can we have
 To war with evil ? Is there any peace
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
 All things have rest, and ripen towards the grave
 In silence ; ripen, fall and cease ;
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

Thunder and lightning, the pseudo-poet does not wield. His garden is a mirage. The beauty that he worships is divorced from truth. He does not write because his eager, unquenchable spirit compels utterance. His spirit is not a burning flame—it is cold and lifeless. It is not his aim to breathe a new life into his contemporaries. A superficial and transient glory is all that he desires. His song is purposeless and unreasonable. For the caravan has departed. Or the pilgrims have died and there is no one to listen to him. His songs naturally do not produce any effect. Nor can they produce any because the singer himself does not possess that divine discontent, that ever-burning spirit which breathes life into poetry and which can infuse a new life into his age, making it live once again with greater zest and power.

India, according to Iqbal, could afford to do away with these pseudo-poets—poets who sing their ineffectual, though beautiful, songs in a tearful voice, who make the melancholy atmosphere still more melancholy and who do nothing to counteract the prevailing impression of death and decay. They are not only ineffectual but something even worse—a tremendous obstacle in the path of recovery. What

the world needed to-day was a poet who would bring a message of life and hope, a message that would once again kindle a spark which, being fanned, would leap up into a glorious blaze. Any poet worth the name should stir his contemporaries, shaking them out of their death-like sleep. He should shock them out of their complacency and make them stand up like one man and march courageously towards a glorious future. India needed such poets and Iqbal tried his best to belong to this company. Again and again he speaks, directly and indirectly, about himself and about the task he has voluntarily set for himself. These passages give us an understanding of Iqbal's work and its importance. They also reveal, and this is more important for our present purpose, what, in Iqbal's opinion, was the duty of a modern Indian poet. Poetry, according to him, has lost its virtue. It has degenerated with the degradation of the nation. It is ineffective, a kind of long-continued dirge, as tedious as a twice-told tale. It is high time that we got rid of our indolence, our love of ease and luxury. A wind from the desert is needed to cleanse all the cobwebs that have accumulated. Be proud and daring like an eagle, swift and brilliant like lightning. Be fit once again for the struggle of existence. Do away with the old, out of date songs which have served their purpose and make way for the new. But do not break away from tradition,

cultural and religious. Build the new nest on the old and tried bough. All this cannot be achieved without a new message, a message that would cause a great awakening. Iqbal would say with Milton : " Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance "..... Iqbal has brought a message which, he thinks, should cause this awakening. He has, he thinks, learnt the secret of life and he wants to communicate this secret to his contemporaries. He brings a promise of life, of life everlasting, but people, he says, do not recognise his message, nor do they recognise the greatness of the poet who brings it. His poems are his precious life-blood which he offers to his contemporaries, only to be misunderstood. He has attempted a difficult task—the union of philosophy with love, and he thinks he has succeeded in his attempt. The philosophy that he presents is not merely a cold set of ideas ; it is something personally felt and realised. Moved deeply himself, he hopes to move others. The love that he feels, the love that gives him "no rally, pause nor rest," finds an outlet in words. His poems are merely a thin, transparent garment through which his love

shines in all its brilliance. He feels the flame of love in his innermost being but he does not know where it comes from. All that lives, dies. Man after his death return unto the dust from which he springs. But this love that he feels in his being convinces him that there is something in him that is not of the earth, something that is not perishable, something that is divine in its origin. This love has taught him how to soar and he is no longer going to remain cooped up in a cage. Iqbal sings of this love in his poems. But he does not speak out boldly, in a straightforward, downright, prosaic manner. His method is indirect, metaphorical ; he makes use of a wealth of imagery. His meaning is not a naked blade but a sheathed sword.

At times, Iqbal disclaims any desire to be considered a poet. Philosophy calls him and his main concern is to give expression to his philosophic ideas—ideas that appear valuable to him. He is no poet, he says. He has something to say and he uses poetry merely as a vehicle of expression, because, probably, it enables him to express his thoughts in a concise, emphatic, concentrated and memorable fashion. “ I am not writing poetry ” ; “ I am not aware of the finer points of art ” ;—such sentences occur frequently.

Such is Iqbal's conception of art in general and of that particular art with which he was most familiar—poetry. He was not a

critic and, naturally, therefore, the critic's approach cannot be his. To understand art fully, it is necessary to approach it in a detached and impersonal manner. If we start with a preconceived notion, we are likely to go wrong. The possession of a philosophy, a philosophy which seeks to interpret life and reveal the secrets of the universe, the possession of such a philosophy is bound to give a certain bias to our thoughts. And this bias is bound to make itself felt in all our observations, interpretations and utterances. To seek to understand art with a biased mind, to hope to penetrate into its innermost recesses and reveal the secrets that lie there, such an effort is not at all likely to be crowned with success. Iqbal, as I have said, is a philosopher or rather he has certain philosophical ideas to propagate and these ideas give a certain bias to his approach. He seeks to relate his conception of art with his doctrine of Self. We are not concerned here with his doctrine of Self, with its significance, implications and importance. It is not difficult to understand how Iqbal came to fit his conception of art into his peculiar system of thought. But the attempt can hardly be considered desirable. Everything; poetry, music, politics, religion, everything is valuable only when it helps to preserve our Selfhood—otherwise, they are like such stuff as dreams are made of, glorious pageants that vanish, leaving not a rack

behind. Those who have dived deep into the secrets of Self, it is they who have, with their superhuman powers, changed a trickling stream into a broad and mighty current. It is Self that illumines our existence. Life itself is but an intoxication, a flame, a being of Self. It is Self, again, which has created the world of poetry and music. These are merely a few examples. Everywhere we stumble against such thoughts. It is obvious, therefore, that Iqbal's conception of art is limited and conditioned by his doctrine of Self and is consequently biased.

The critical thoughts that Iqbal expresses are, unfortunately, not expressed in prose. Verse is not a suitable medium for the successful communication of criticism. At least, it is very difficult to enunciate one's critical ideas through this medium with absolute clarity and precision. Words are not always used as they should be. We generally think and talk loosely. In our daily, ordinary conversation we do not take the trouble of saying just what we mean, no more and no less. Perhaps, we do not even realise that we are thinking and talking loosely. In criticism, however, it is required that we should communicate our thoughts in an unmistakably clear and precise manner. But, frequently, the critics are not very careful and a lot of what passes for criticism is only a vague, indefinite expression of our hazy opinions. When the medium used

is verse, this unfortunate tendency becomes more pronounced. The exigencies of metre and rhyme, rather than considerations of exactitude and lucidity, dictate the choice of words. The desire also to write poetically in the conventional sense of the term causes further difficulties. A beautiful word, a novel metaphor, an attractive image—such will-o'-the-wisps frequently tempt us and lead us astray. The result may sometimes be fine poetry but hardly ever creditable criticism. A glance at those poems in which Iqbal talks about art would be enough to show that the language used is not suitable for a scientific discussion. It does not lend itself to exactitude. It is colourful, imaginative and withal rather uncertain. To even the most superficial reader it is at once clear that Iqbal is trying to say something. He has, obviously, thought about this matter and has arrived at certain conclusions—conclusions which he has fully realised and which he wants to communicate to his readers. But instead of a clear, logical, more or less scientific discourse, we are given a series of colourful, poetic and rather vague statements.

The various thoughts that Iqbal seeks to express, apart from their peculiar and personal philosophical bias, will not appear unfamiliar to one who is familiar with European criticism. It is hardly necessary to give a parallel for every idea that we find in Iqbal. It is enough to

quote a few passages from Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* and the similarity would be too obvious to need any comment :—

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge ; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred.....Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be created according to determination of the will.....

Poetry thus makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world..... Poetry redeems from decay the visitations of the divinity in man.

Poetry turns all things to loveliness ; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful, and it adds beauty to that which is most deformed.....It transmutes all that it touches.....

All things exist as they are perceived ; at least in relation to the percipient.....Poetrymakes us the inhabitant of a world to which the familiar world is a chaos..... It purges from our inward sight the film of familiarity which observes from us the wonder of our being.....

The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry.....Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration ; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which

futurity cast upon the present ; the words which express what they understand not ; the trumpets which sing to battle and feel not what they inspire, the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

IQBAL'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS GOD

NOT all poets walk in the shadow of God. To many He is a vague something, very much removed from the everyday world. His voice may be loud like thunder but it is as remote. The next world is dark and difficult to understand. Who knows what lies beyond Death's stormy waste? To ordinary mortals and to most poets the whispers of eternity sound like the faint murmurings of distant brook ; a soft note conscious but not insistent. To some, however, God is like a living presence. He pervades everything and is visible everywhere. Some call it Nature : others call it God. But poets of this tribe are conscious of those invisible calls, they hearken to these voices and let their hearts be lit up by these beams from a larger consciousness.

A Wordsworth worships a Being whose

Dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean, and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts
And rolls through all things.

Obviously to him matter is animated by a soul and in his poetry we catch glimpses of a living personality. When he lends himself to a

wrapt contemplation of Nature he feels as if his animal self were swallowed up by the spirit of Nature. 'Sensation, soul and form' melt into him. To quote him :

In such access of mind, in such high hour of visitation
from the living God
Thought was nought ; in enjoyment it expired

Rapt into still communion that transcends
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
That made him ; it was blessedness and love.

We note here a few things. With Wordsworth it is a still communion. His mind is full of thanks and receives God's favour with a humble and grateful heart. It is more or less a passive relationship. I shall refer to it later. Now, I turn for a moment to another great poet : this time of the East. I mean Tagore. Listen to this :

"When thou commandest me to sing, it seems that my heart would break with pride, and I look into thy face, and tears come to my eyes.

All that is harsh and dissonant in my life melts into one sweet harmony—and my adoration spreads wings like a glad bird on its flight across the sea.

I know thou takest pleasure in my singing. I know that only as a singer I come before thy presence.

Drunk with the joy of singing I forget myself and call thee friend, who art my God."

In this dim world of devotion, Iqbal's voice

sounds like the cry of the eagle facing the sun :

He dares God "to show Himself in all His Beauty and all His splendour," as in :

کیسوئے قابدار کو اور بولی قابدار کو
ہوش و خود شناسی تو تلب و نظر شناسی کو

"I am confined and hidden," he says, "but why is Beauty hidden? Either discover me or reveal Thyself."

عشق بولی ہو حجاب میں حسن بولی ہو حجاب میں
یا تو خود آشکار ہو یا سجدے آشکار کو

But I am anticipating. To return. In Tagore we find the flowering of a great tradition, but his is the attitude of a devotee always.

He says :

"In Thy world I have no work to do; my useless voice can only break out in tunes without a purpose."

"When the hour strikes for Thy silent worship at the dark temple of midnight, command me, my Master, to stand before Thee, to sing."

I should be the last man to dismiss the deathless poetry of Tagore with a sniff. His passionate prostration at the feet of his deity is in itself susceptible of variations, now tender, now revealing. But fundamentally it is the attitude of one who accepts his position as an imperfect vassal of God, before whom he stands always as a suppliant.

He says :

"When I give up the helm I know that the time has come for Thee to take it. What there is to do, will be instantly done. Vain is the struggle."

Struggle on the other hand is the soul of Iqbal's poetry.

He says :

"Life is struggle ; it is not asking for things as a right."

زندگی جہد است و استحقاق نیست

If you want his advice :

“ Dive into the river of life and fight the waves. Everlasting life is the outcome of conflict.”

بدریا غلط و با موجشی در آویز
حیات جاوداں اندر ستیز است

For Tagore life is static. It is a beautiful pattern cut by the artist hand of God. His greatest desire is to merge into God's being, to lose himself in God's many-coloured immensity. Therein lies his happiness !

To Iqbal this would be too humiliating. His man does not seek death and absorption in ultimate Reality. He would reject such a thought with horror. His Adam is heralded with a flourish of trumpets. He is to be seer and critic, destroyer and creator. No wonder there is a stir in the heavens when he is born.

“ It was a triumph for Love, the Principle of Growth that a feeling heart was given to the world. Beauty trembled, because the seer and critic was born. Nature was worried, because out of helpless clay, a self-builder, self-destroyer and self-critic had come into existence.”

نعرہ زد عشق کہ خونیں جگرے پیدا شد
حسن لرزید کہ صاحب نظرے پیدا شد
فطرت آشفت کہ از خاک جهان مجبور
خود گرے خود شکنے خود نگرے پیدا شد

And how does this dynamic force, this man deport himself ? How does he seek his God ? Surprising as it is, he does not seek his God or any God. He seeks himself. He is an active

Principle of life. He seeks danger, activity, completeness. For him

"Life is ceaseless endeavour."

ہستم اگر می روم گر نہ روم نیستم

He believes in 'endless quest'.

زندہ ہر ایک چیز ہے کوششی ناتمام سے

He discovers :

"That when man realises himself and all his potentialities, he becomes a God."

خودی کی جلوتوں میں مصطفائی

خودی کی خلوتوں میں کبریائی

زمین و آسمان و کرسی و عرش

خودی کی زد میں ہے ساری خدائی

But Iqbal did not achieve this certainty in a day, nor can man become a God by mere thinking. Through a long and painful process of trial and error, of self-birth, dropping shell after shell of selfish mortality, spurning favours and laughing at fate Iqbal mounts the rungs of Self, and in the final resort has been able to talk with God on equal terms. There is a stage in his development when he can say to God :

"What sort of a raree-show is this wonder-house of to-day and to-morrow ! Give me something new."

طرح تو افگن کہ ما جدت پسند افتادہ ایم

ایں چہ حیرت خانہ امروز و فردا ساختی

But, this again is not how he started his spiritual pilgrimage. As a young man his attitude is one of distant respect. There is nothing personal far less intimate in his orthodox feelings for God. Sometimes he is vaguely pantheistic, as many Eastern poets are. For instance, he says :

"The unity of things is so evident, that, I am sure, a drop of human blood would fall, if you were to prick, with the point of a lancet, a petal of the rose."

کمال وحدت عیاں ہے ایسا کہ نوک نشتر سے توجو چھائیڑے
یقینی ہے مجھ کو گرے رگ گل سے قطرہ انسان کے لہو کا

At others he calls this world an attempt at self-expression on God's part, as in :

عالم ظہور جلوۂ ذوق شہود ہے

But the tentative mysticism of one or the hesitant philosophy of the other are not deeply felt. There is no marriage yet, between idea and passion. Thought has not burnt itself into his heart. It is not diversity that he seeks yet : he is after unity in diversity ; as in :

" He is in the moon and the stars, and He burns in the beauty of the dawn. Do not apply to thine eyes the kohl which teaches you to draw lines and make distinctions."

تارے میں وہ قمر میں وہ جلوہ گہ سحر میں وہ
چشم نظارہ میں نہ تو سرمۂ امتیاز دے

God reigns supreme in the heavens, and Iqbal finds a pleasure in occasional prostration. His heart is full of passionate fervour. He says :

" Flowers spring wherever I prostrate myself : conven-

tional prayers cannot express the depth of my devotion."

رہ دیر تاختہ گل ز جبین ساجدہ ریڑم
کہ نیاز من نہ گنجد بدو رکعت نمازے

He longs to see, to win near to, his God.
He admits :

"The story of Sinai never gets old, because every heart is stirred by the desire of Moses."

نمیگردد کہن افسانہ طور
کہ در ہر دل تمنائے کلیم است

Then how is man to achieve a closer understanding of, and a more personal approach to God? The answer is : by developing his individuality. He will thus acquire dignity. He will learn to respect himself. He will not ask anything of God even. For Iqbal says :

"Do not beg, even from God, for asking weakens one's individuality."

"How long," he says, "will you beg for light like Moses on Mount Sinai? Let a flame like that of the Burning Bush leap out of thyself."

کب تلک طور پہ درپوزہ گری مثل کلیم
اپنی ہستی سے عیاں شعلہ سیناٹی کر

Or, again he says :

"O bird of the heavens, death is better for thee than the food which checks the flight of thy wings."

اے طاثر لاهوتی امی رزق سے موت اچھی
جس رزق سے آتی ہو پرواز میں کوتاہی

He can barely suffer to live in a world created by another. "Man," he says, "must create his own world."

پہلوںک ڈالے یہ زمین و آسمان مستعار
اور خاکستر سے آپ اپنا جہاں پیدا کرے

Naturally, Iqbal soon leaves behind him the devotional stage of his relationship with God. 'Ishq or love, breaks his bond. 'Ishq first gives him confidence.

"He knows that he is, because of the fire that burns in his heart. Love makes it clear to him that he exists."

در بود و نبود من اندیشہ گمانہا داشت
از عشق ہویدا شد ایی نکتہ کہ ہستم من

He seeks to develop his individuality, because, according to him, "to live is to possess a definite outline, a concrete individuality." It is love which helps him to build his individuality.

"Love reveals to him the mysteries of self-knowledge and the secrets of Dominion."

جب عشق سکھاتا ہے آداب خود آگاہی
کیلتے ہیں غلاموں پر اسرار شہنشاہی

"Love does not know how to bend ; knowledge is mere mental trickery, if it is not inspired by love."

وہ کچھ اور شے ہے محبت نہیں ہے
سکھاتی ہے جو غزنوی کو ایازی
یہ جوہر اگر کار فرما نہیں ہے
تو ہیں علم و حکمت فقط شیشہ بازی
نہ محتاج سلطان نہ مرعوب سلطان
محبت ہے آزادی و بے نیازی

It is Love which liberates the Ego. 'Ishq takes man through the evolutionary stages of خودی i.e., Ego. Self-knowledge and self-realisation reveal man to himself. As Iqbal says : "In its highest form, 'Ishq means the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them. Love fortifies the Ego, because Love is the power of assimilative action."

"So he calls upon Love to help him in this second creation, this rebirth of a new man. The dwellers of this earth," he says, "have grown too old. Come, Love, make a new Adam with my clay."

بیا اے عشق، اے رمز دل ما
بیا اے کشت ما، اے حاصل ما
کہن گشتند این خای نهادار
دگر آدم بنا کن از گل ما

But what will this new Adam do ? Does he know where everything is leading ? Is Love enough ? No, Love is the means ; the development of the Self, 'Khudi', the Ego, is the end : because 'Khudi' is the secret of Life. Through 'Khudi' will man reach the final heights. For, as Iqbal says :

"Every atom of this universe burns to reveal itself ; every particle yearns to be a god."

ہر چیز ہے مگو خود نمائی
ہر ذرہ شہید کبریائی

"In building up one's Ego lies the secret of godhead."

ہے ذوق نمود زندگی موت
تعمیر خودی میں ہے خدائی

"The development of the Ego is the awakening of the universe."

خودی کیا ہے راز درون حیات
خودی کیا ہے بیداری کائنات

Armed with this secret, emboldened by this promethean force, he professes to share in God's work. He creates ; he improves. He declares: God created the world but man bettered it. Thus is man a sharer in God's work. Thus is man His rival. This is his real destiny. Iqbal says to God :

"Thou didst create the night and I made the lamp. Thou didst give to the world deserts and barren hills and I embellished it with flower-beds, gardens and orchards. I am he who makes mirrors out of stones and cures out of poisons."

تو شب آفریدی چراغ آفریدم
سفال آفریدی ایام آفریدم
بیابان و کہسار و راغ آفریدی
خیابان و گلزار و باغ آفریدم
من آنم کہ از سنگ آئینہ سازم
من آنم کہ از زہر نوشینہ سازم

Therefore, we find, that Love or 'Ishq is the first step towards liberation. The development of the Ego is man's object. If the essence of life is Love, the essence of Love is 'Ego'.

جوہر زندگی ہے عشق جوہر عشق ہے خودی

How far is Iqbal from that pantheism which he borrowed from the past. Now he has

a real philosophy. To quote him : " Life is individual ; there is no such thing as universal life. God Himself is an individual. Only He is the most unique individual." But man, the individual Ego, is neither part of, nor need he be subject to, God the ultimate Ego. "But every ego is unique, only God is the most developed and the most unique Ego."

When man reaches the highest stages of ' Khudi ' he realises the kingdom of God on earth. The kingdom of God on earth, according to Iqbal, means : " The democracy of more or less unique individuals."

When man achieves this uniqueness, he sees more than he has ever seen before. He finds himself to be the critic, that the universe was waiting for, through æons of servitude. He is the discoverer now. He subjects God in his turn to an endless catechism. He taunts Him. He says :

"A thousand worlds blossom like roses in the meadows of my thought, and Thou hast created one world, and that even out of man's wasted hopes."

صد جهان می روید از کشت خیال ما چو گل
یک جهان و آن هم از خون تمنا ساختی

His lips now curl in scorn :

" Create," he says, " something new and beautiful, make a finer and wiser Adam. To create a china-doll of a man does not befit a God."

نقش دگر طراز ده آدم پخته تر بیار
لعبت خاک ساختن می نه بسزد خدائے را

It is God who is beholden to him now. He says :

" I share in Thy Light, because I have given my eagerness as my yearning to the sun and the moon."

از تو درون سینہ ام برق تجلی کہ من
با من و مہر دادہ ام تلخی انتظار را

He finds God wanting in humanity. He asks :

" What hast Thou to do in this world of pain and longing ?
Dost Thou have my fire or my restlessness ? "

ہے جہان درمندان تو بگو چہ کار داری ؟
تب و تاب ما شناسی دل بے قرار داری ؟

He refuses to shoulder any responsibility. He cries :

" If the world is awry and the stars have crooked courses, who is responsible ? Thou or I ? "

اگر کج رو ہیں انجم آسمان تیرا ہے یا میرا
منجھے فکر جہاں کیوں ہو جہاں تیرا ہے یا میرا

He who was for long a plaything in the hands of Satan is now big enough and generous enough to pity him. He is, however, pitiless in exposing God's share in the matter.

" Thou," he says, " acquainted every thorn with the story of my Fall. Thou didst throw me in the desert of madness and made me a by-word."

آشنا ہر خار را از قصہ ما ساختی
در بیابان جنوں بردی و رسوا ساختی

" I was damned because I tasted of the forbidden fruit and *he*, because he refused to humble himself in prostra-

tion. Neither dost Thou make up with him, poor thing, nor hast Thou made any overtures to me."

جرم ما از دانه، تقصیر او از سجدہ

نہ بہ آن نے چارہ می سازی نہ با ما ساختی

So he counsels God to be loving. He offers Him friendship:

"Come into my heart," he says, "for a moment, and rest therein, after the toils of Godhood, for it is better a thousand times to walk in the path of friendship than to be merely good."

خوشر ز ہزار پارسائی گامے بطریق آشنائی

در سینئہ من دلے بیاسا از محنت و کلفت خدائی

"Tell me all Thou knowest about me. Whence do I come? and where dost Thou come from?"

مارا ز مقام ما خبر کن مائیم کجا و تو کجائی

He does not look up any more. He is on a level now. He is the sought one. It is God who finds him worthy of attention. He says:

"If I have built Ka'bins and temples in thy search, it is as much because I want to see thee, as that thou didst desire a sight of My face."

در طلبشی دل تپید دیر و حرم آفرید

ما بہ تمنائے او، او بہ تماشائے ماست

It is God who wants to look at this new force in the universe. Iqbal says:

"I am hidden from God. He is now ensnared by desire. He seeks me."

ما از خدائے گم شدہ ایم او بے جستجوست

چوں ما نیازمند و گرفتار آرزوست

"Sometimes he writes his message on the lips of the

poppy and at others he expresses his longing through the painful notes of the birds."

گاه به برگ لاله نويسد پيام خويش
گاه درون سينت، مرغى به هاؤ هوست

How far has Iqbal travelled indeed ! This 'worm of a day' has leaped beyond the confines of this mortal world. This spark of infinity is blazing in splendour now. Even God acknowledges his stature, and as sympathetically as one can expect from His divine Intelligence. He stints neither his admiration nor his encouragement. He says :

"Life is eternal, it dies and yet it lives. It is all creation and eagerness. If you are alive, create : seize like myself, the heavens with your hands."

زندگى هم فانى و هم باقى است
اين همه خلاقى و مشتاقى است
زنده مشتاق شو خلاق شو
همچو ما گيرنده آفاق شو

To me
"an unbeliever is one who has not developed the power of creation."

هر كه او را قوت تخليق نيست
پيشى ما جز كافر و زبديق نيست

"Lover of truth ! Be like a shining sword and be the fate of thine own world."

مرد حق ! برنده چور شمشير باش
خود جهان خويش را تقدير باش

Man is now artist and artificer ; he is

builder, creator and judge. He does not ask now for a sight of God's face. He knows it line by line and shade by shade. How distant, indeed, is Iqbal from Wordsworth, that pathetically happy man, whose bliss lay in the enlightenment that Nature accorded to him, when all his conscious powers were laid asleep ! That passive recipient of Nature's bounty !

And how different Iqbal is from Tagore, that eternal worshipper whose ears were ever turned to catch the keen call of the Master's flute ; who raises his beautiful voice just to ask, " O Lord ! give me strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love."

Iqbal's love of God has nothing to do with fetters. He challenges God. He says :

" I complain of Thy stinginess, O God ! Thou hast the whole of space and I am bound by the four quarters."

تیری خدائی سے ہے میرے جنون کو گلہ
اپنے لئے لا مکان میرے لئے چار سو

Iqbal disturbs the placidity, the stillness, the stagnant calm with which God had surrounded Himself. It is only Iqbal who can say :

" The houries and the angels are enthralled by my imaginative daring. I am the cause of unrest in Thy world of Light."

حور و فرشتہ ہیں اسیر میرے تخیلات میں
میری نگاہ سے خلل تیری تجلیات میں

Iqbal, who thirty years ago could pray

objectly for effect in such a tone :

" I am the plaintive *bulbul* of a forsaken garden I ask for effect, O Lord ; be generous to one who is in need."

میں بلبل نالاں ہوں اک اجڑے گلستاں کا
تاثیر کا سائل ہوں محتاج کو داتا دے

can say now in his prime :

" When the roll of my deeds is brought up on the Day of Reckoning, Look into it and be ashamed as Thou wilt shame me."

روز حساب جب مرا پیشی ہو دفتر عمل
آپ بھی شرمسار ہو مجھے کو بھی شرمسار کر

Man has now come into his own. He has taken a leaf out of God's own book. He is engaged in the work of creation. He can proudly tell God :

" Why didst Thou turn me out of Eden ? There is so much to do in this world, that Thou must wait long for my coming."

باغ بہشت سے مجھے حکم سفر دیا تھا کیوں
کار جہاں دراز ہے اب میرا انتظار کر

This is the apotheosis of man ! It is not a mere mortal daring speech with a sublime Being, it is an equal conferring with a Power. There was truth in his words :

تعمیر خودی میں ہے خدائی

" In the development of 'Khudi' lies the secret of God-head."

